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The Collier Classics

LITERATURE ✓ SCIENCE ✓ HISTORY
CONTEMPORARY BELLES-LETTRES

Edited by

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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AMERICAN

PATRIOTS *and* STATESMEN

from WASHINGTON *to* LINCOLN

*Revealed in the Letters, Addresses, State Papers
and other Writings of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, WILLIAM
H. SEWARD, STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS, JAMES RUSSELL
LOWELL, ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS, SALMON P. CHASE,
JOHN C. CRITTENDEN, CHARLES SUMNER and many
others. Edited by*

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Professor of the Science of Government

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Volume Five

PATRIOTISM *of the* NORTH AND SOUTH

1846 - 1861



The Collier Classics

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CHAPTER XXV—STRIFE FOR EXPANSION (1846-1848)

From 1846 to 1848 the principal interest to the American mind was the Mexican War and its consequences. The breaking out of that war in May, 1846, led to a fierce controversy in Congress, in the White House, and out of doors. The Diary of President Polk gives us an opportunity of knowing the inside workings of the administration, and has been drawn upon for several of the most interesting extracts in this chapter. The three main questions before the country were whether the war was a just one; whether Oregon should be annexed; and what should be done with the territory taken from Mexico. President Polk stood out for the righteousness of the war, and for the annexation both of Oregon and California. He was supported by statesmen like Benton, who foresaw the relation of the Pacific Coast with power in the Pacific region and trade with the Orient. The war revealed many weaknesses in the military system of the country; but, from a military point of view, was entirely successful. President Polk refused the temptation to annex the whole of Mexico at a time when it was possible. When peace was made, the Union was enlarged by the addition of the vast region of New Mexico and California. Those opposed to war altogether, of whom Charles Sumner was the most noted, saw nothing but evil in the beginning and end of the struggle, and many who supported the army disliked the process of conquest.



After a photograph made about 1860 owned by F. J. Garrison

I. War and Mexico (1846)

By REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS CORWIN

An Ohio man whose career seemed arrested by this speech, but later he was appointed minister to Mexico by Lincoln.

THE President has said he does not expect to hold Mexican territory by conquest. Why then conquer it? Why waste thousands of lives and millions of money fortifying towns and creating governments, if, at the end of the war, you retire from the graves of your soldiers and the desolated country of your foes, only to get money from Mexico for the expense of all your toil and sacrifice? Who ever heard, since Christianity was propagated among men, of a nation taxing its people, enlisting its young men and marching off two thousand miles to fight a people merely to be paid for it in money? What is this but hunting a market for blood, selling the lives of your young men, marching them in regiments to be slaughtered and paid for, like oxen and brute beasts? Sir, this is, when stripped naked, that atrocious idea first promul-

Strife for Expansion

gated in the President's message, and now advocated here, of fighting on till we can get our indemnity for the past as well as the present slaughter. We have chastised Mexico, and if it were worth while to do so, we have, I dare say, satisfied the world that we can fight. What now? Why the mothers of America are asked to send another of their sons to blow out the brains of Mexicans because they refuse to pay the price of the first who fell there, fighting for glory! And what if the second fall, too? The Executive, the parental reply, is, "We shall have him paid for, we shall get full indemnity!" Sir, I have no patience with this flagitious notion of fighting for indemnity, and this under the equally absurd and hypocritical pretense of securing an honorable peace. An honorable peace! If you have accomplished the objects of the war (if indeed you had an object which you dare to avow), cease to fight, and you will have peace....

Sir, had one come and demanded Bunker Hill of the people of Massachusetts, had England's lion ever showed himself there, is there a man over thirteen and under ninety who would not have been ready to meet him—is there a river on this continent that would not have run red with blood—is there a field but would have been piled high with the unburied bones of slaughtered Americans before these consecrated battle fields of liberty should have been wrested from

Thomas Corwin

us? But this same American goes into a sister republic, and says to poor, weak Mexico, "Give up your territory—you are unworthy to possess it—I have got one-half already—all I ask of you is to give up the other!" England might as well, in the circumstances I have described, have come and demanded of us, "Give up the Atlantic slope—give up this trifling territory from the Alleghany mountains to the sea; it is only from Maine to St. Mary's—only about one-third of your Republic, and the least interesting portion of it." What would be the response? They would say, we must give this up to John Bull. Why? "He wants room." The Senator from Michigan says he must have this. Why, my worthy Christian brother, on what principle of justice? "I want room!"

Sir, look at this pretense of want of room. With twenty millions of people, you have about one thousand millions of acres of land, inviting settlement by every conceivable argument—bringing them down to a quarter of a dollar an acre, and allowing every man to squat where he pleases. But the Senator from Michigan says we will be two hundred millions in a few years, and we want room. If I were a Mexican I would tell you, "Have you not room in your own country to bury your dead men? If you come into mine we will greet you with bloody hands, and welcome you to hospitable graves." . . .

Strife for Expansion

Do we not know, Mr. President, that it is a law never to be repealed, that falsehood shall be short lived? Was it not ordained of old that truth only shall abide forever? Whatever we may say to-day, or whatever we may write in our books, the stern tribunal of history will review it all, detect falsehood, and bring us to judgment before that posterity which shall bless or curse us, as we may act *now*, wisely or otherwise. We may hide in the grave (which awaits us all) in vain; we may hope there, like the foolish bird that hides its head in the sand, in the vain belief that its body is not seen, yet even there this preposterous excuse of want of "room" shall be laid bare, and the quick-coming future will decide that it was a hypocritical pretense, under which we sought to conceal the avarice which prompted us to covet and to seize by force *that* which was not ours. . . .

We stand this day on the crumbling brink of that gulf—we see its bloody eddies wheeling and boiling before us—shall we not pause before it be too late? How plain again is here the path, I may add the only way of duty, of prudence, of true patriotism. Let us abandon all idea of acquiring further territory, and by consequence cease at once to prosecute this war. Let us call home our armies, and bring them at once within our own acknowledged limits. Show Mexico that you are sincere when you say you desire nothing by con-

E. B. Holmes

quest. She has learned that she cannot encounter you in war, and if she had not, she is too weak to disturb you here. Tender her peace, and my life on it, she will then accept it. But whether she shall or not, you will have peace without her consent. It is your invasion that has made war, your retreat will restore peace. Let us then close forever the approaches of internal feud, and so return to the ancient concord and the old way of national prosperity and permanent glory. Let us here, in this temple consecrated to the Union, perform a solemn lustration; let us wash Mexican blood from our hands, and on these altars, in the presence of that image of the Father of his country that looks down upon us, swear to preserve honorable peace with all the world, and eternal brotherhood with each other.

Thomas Corwin, *Life and Speeches* (Cincinnati, 1896), 287-314 *passim*.

2. My Country, Right or Wrong (1846)

By REPRESENTATIVE E. B. HOLMES

A New York lawyer and member of Congress.

IT is alleged upon this floor, that to declare one's self for the war, and to speak against the present Administration of this Government, is an

Strife for Expansion

absurdity ; that, while he pretends to go for it, he goes against it, by weakening the moral power of the Government.

I had supposed the moral power of the Government, so far as these functionaries could wield it, had been expended ; and that now, moral suasion proving inefficient, we had determined to try the physical force of the country. It is termed a kind of *moral treason* to speak against the present Administration. What! *treason* to speak of the manner in which this *moral power* has been exerted, and of the causes which led to the necessity of resorting to force against a sister republic? It may be *treason* to the party. It may be counter to the edicts of the Executive, to have any of its votaries call any of its acts to the attention of the people. Such may not do it. But shall the motives of those who do not bend the pliant knee to power, and tamely submit to Executive usurpation, be called in question? Charged with opposition to the country! Is this the freedom of your boasted institutions? Sir, it is because I am in favor of the country, that I am endeavoring to show how its moral power has been polluted, paralyzed, and perverted by the conduits through which it has passed. I do it with no personal or vindictive feelings, but in view of a solemn duty, and in the hope that the people will see the necessity of rising in their might, and exerting, with efficiency and effect,

E. B. Holmes

the *moral power* which has fallen still-born from the hands of the Executive.

Notwithstanding the morality of the sentiment uttered by my friend from Ohio, [Mr. DELANO,] that in time of war he was for his country, right or wrong, has been questioned in this hall, I re-iterate it. I hope the moral sense of gentlemen will stand the shock, when I tell them I am for my country, any way and always, *right or wrong*. In all time, under all circumstances, in prosperity or in adversity, in peace or in war, in every aspect which ingenuity can invent or imagination can conceive, I am for my country, *right or wrong*. Sir, I am for my children, right or wrong. My duty impels me to chide and rebuke them when wrong; but to be for them, and feel for them, and to act for their prosperity, happiness, and protection, whether *right or wrong*, is a feeling interwoven with the very ligaments of my nature. Sir, in this same sense I am for my country, right or wrong; freely reproofing her public functionaries when wrong, and holding up their constitutional aggressions and their legislative oppressions to the just judgment of the people. . . .

Sir, the Constitution guaranties the liberty of speech and of the press. But on the 11th of May, where was the boasted prerogative of your Constitution in relation to the liberty of speech? Where this inestimable prerogative of freemen?

Strife for Expansion

Its death-knell was heard in this Hall. The lips of the 6,000 farmers, the 4,000 mechanics, and the hundred of manufacturers and professional men speaking through me upon this floor, were sealed in silence. The vivid and conscious convictions of an outraged people were stifled, and denied an utterance. The minority upon this floor, representing, as appears by the popular vote, a majority of the people, were denied the right of speech. The grave and momentous question of peace or war, involving the life, the liberty, of our people, and the happiness of our common country, was pressed upon us without debate. The imprudent acts of the President, as well as the perilous condition of our army, their cries and their blood by reason of this imprudence, was made known to us, and yet not one word could be said upon the subject. The shield of secrecy was thrust between us and the country. The full and speedy relief which we were willing to grant to the army and the country was coupled with a shield for the President and his advisers, and a declaration of war. I ask whether such precipitancy in declaring a national war, in breaking the peace of the world, is becoming in the Representatives of this people? Is it wise, and does it become the dignity and forbearance which should characterize enlightened and benevolent freemen? Is it magnanimous or just thus to stifle debate. . . .

James Russell Lowell

When and where this state of things is to end, God only knows. If our rulers are determined, as they now seem, upon annihilation and conquest, and the *people* shall sanction it, this is but the twilight of the political darkness that must succeed it. To my mind, the *day* when the *people* of this republic shall fully sanction the subjugation and conquest of a foreign nation, dissimilar from us in language, habits, and laws, will be the darkest, by far the darkest *day*, ever witnessed by this republic. . . .

Twenty-ninth Congress, 1st Sess., *Congressional Globe* (Washington, 1846), 955-956 *passim*.

3. Poetical Protest Against the Mexican War (1846)

By HOSEA BIGLOW

(*James Russell Lowell*)

Lowell wrote a series of so-called Biglow Papers, sharply attacking slavery and the Mexican War.

THRASH away, you 'll *hev* to rattle
On them kittle drums o' yourn,—
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle
Thet is ketched with mouldy corn;
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,
Let folks see how spry you be,—
Guess you 'll toot till you are yellor
'Fore you git ahold o' me!

Strife for Expansion

Thet air flag 's a leetle rotten,
Hope it aint your Sunday's best;—
Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton
To stuff out a soger's chest:
Sence we farmers hev to pay fer 't,
Ef you must wear humps like these,
Sposin' you should try salt hay fer 't,
It would du ez slick ez grease.

.

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—
There you hev it plain an' flat;
I don't want to go no further
Than my Testyment fer that;
God hez sed so plump an' fairly,
It 's ez long ez it is broad,
An' you 've gut to git up airly
Ef you want to take in God.

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers
Make the thing a grain more right;
'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
Will extcuse ye in His sight;
Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
An' go stick a feller thru,
Guv'ment aint to answer for it,
God 'll send the bill to you.

Wut 's the use o' meetin'-goin'
Every Sabbath, wet or dry,

James Russell Lowell

Ef it 's right to go amowin'
Feller-men like oats an' rye?
I dunno but wut it 's pooty
 Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—
But it 's curus Christian dooty
 This ere cuttin' folks's throats.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy
 Tell they 're pupple in the face,—
It 's a grand gret cemetary
 Fer the barthrights of our race;
They jest want this Californy
 So 's to lug new slave-states in
To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
 An' to plunder ye like sin.

.

Tell ye jest the eend I 've come to
 Arter cipherin' plaguy smart,
An' it makes a handy sum, tu,
 Any gump could learn by heart;
Laborin' man an' laborin' woman
 Hev one glory an' one shame,
Ev'y thin' thet 's done inhuman
 Injers all on 'em the same.

.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?
 I expect you 'll hev to wait;
Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye
 You 'll begin to kal'late;

Strife for Expansion

'Spose the crows wun't fall to pickin'
All the carkiss from your bones,
Coz you helped to give a lickin'
To them poor half-Spanish drones?

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy
Whether I 'd be sech a goose
Ez to jine ye,—guess you 'd fancy
The eternal bung wuz loose!
She wants me fer home consumption,
Let alone the hay 's to mow,—
Ef you 're arter folks o' gumption,
You 've a darned long row to hoe.

.

Massachusetts, God forgive her,
She 's akneelin' with the rest,
She, thet ough' to ha' clung fer ever
In her grand old eagle-nest;
She thet ough' to stand so fearless
Wile the racks are round her hurled,
Holdin' up a beacon peerless
To the oppressed of all the world!

.

Clang the bells in every steeple,
Call all true men to disown
The tradoochers of our people,
The enslavers o' their own;
Let our dear old Bay State proudly
Put the trumpet to her mouth,

James Russell Lowell

Let her ring this messidge loudly
In the ears of all the South:—

“I ’ll return ye good for evil
Much ez we frail mortils can,
But I wun’t go help the Devil
Makin’ man the cus o’ man;
Call me coward, call me traitor,
Jest ez suits your mean idees,—
Here I stand a tyrant-hater,
An’ the friend o’ God an’ Peace!”

Ef I ’d *my* way I hed ruther
We should go to work an’ part,—
They take one way, we take t’other,—
Guess it would n’t break my heart;
Man hed ough’ to put asunder
Them thet God has noways jined;
An’ I should n’t greatly wonder
Ef there ’s thousands o’ my mind.

James Russell Lowell, *The Biglow Papers* (Cambridge, 1848), 3-II.

Strife for Expansion

4. Negotiation with a Mexican Exile (1846)

By PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK

One of the curiosities of the Mexican War was this secret negotiation in behalf of Santa Anna, who was allowed to go back to Mexico.

COL. ATOCHA stated this morning that since he saw me in June last he had visited Gen'l Santa Anna in his exile at Havannah, and that he had left him a month ago. His conversation with me, he said he desired to be confidential. He represented that Santa Anna was in constant communication with his friends in Mexico, and received by every vessel that left Vera Cruz hundreds of letters. He intimated that the recent Revolution headed by Paredes met Santa Anna's sanction, and that Santa Anna might soon be in power again in Mexico. He said that Santa Anna was in favour of a Treaty with the U. S., and that in adjusting a boundary between the two countries the Del Norte should be the Western Texas line, and the Colorado of the West down through the Bay of San Francisco to the Sea should be the Mexican line on the North, and that Mexico should cede all East and North of these natural boundaries to the U. S. for a pecuniary consideration, and mentioned thirty millions of Dollars as the sum. This sum

James K. Polk

he said Santa Anna believed would pay the most pressing debts of Mexico, support the army until the condition of the finances could be improved, and enable the Government to be placed on a permanent footing. Col. Atocha said that Santa Anna was surprised that the U. S. Naval force had been withdrawn from Vera Cruz last fall, and that Gen'l Taylor's army was kept at Corpus Christi instead of being stationed on the Del Norte; and that the U. S. would never be able to treat with Mexico, without the presence of an imposing force by land and sea, and this, Col. Atocha added, was his own opinion. Col. Atocha did not say that he was sent by Santa Anna to hold this conversation with me; but I think it probable he was so. . . .

At precisely 2½ O'Clock P. P. [M.] Col. Atocha called, when I gave him a further audience of more than an hour. He had a long conversation with me about the present condition of Mexico, and the relations of the U. States with that Government. . . . He repeated that Gen'l Santa Anna was in favour of a Treaty between Mexico and the U. States by which the former should, for a pecuniary consideration, cede to the U. States all the country east of the Del Norte & North of the Colorado of the West, and had named thirty millions of dollars as the sum that would be satisfactory. I then remarked that Mexico must satisfy the claims of American citizens,

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and that if the Government of Mexico had any proposition to make, such as was suggested, it would be considered when made: to which Col. Atocha said no Government or administration in Mexico dared to make such a proposition, for if they did so there would be another revolution by which they would be overthrown. He said they must appear to be forced to agree to such a proposition. He went on to give his own opinion and, as he said, that of Gen'l Santa Anna, that the U. States should take strong measures before any settlement could be effected. . . . He said that Paredes, Almonte, & Gen'l Santa Anna were all willing for such an arrangement, but that they dare not make it until it was made apparent to the Archbishop of Mexico & the people generally that it was necessary to save their country from a war with the U. States. He said the last words which Gen'l Santa Anna said to him when he was leaving Havanna a month ago was, "when you see the President, tell him to take strong measures, and such a Treaty can be made & I will sustain it." Col. Atocha said the Government of Mexico was indebted to the Archbishop half a million of dollars, and he would be reconciled by an assurance by the Mexican Government that he should be paid, when the consideration should be paid by the U. States. He said Paredes and Almonte were both in favour of such a settlement if they dare make it, and that Gen'l Santa Anna con-

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cunning with them would support them in it. . . . Col. Atocha is [a] person to whom I would not give my confidence. He is evidently a man of talents and education, but his whole manner & conversation impressed me with a belief that he was not reliable, and that he would betray any confidence reposed in him, when it was his interest to do so. I therefore heard all he said but communicated nothing to him. He wished me to see Mr. Branch Mars [Brantz Mayer] of Baltimore, formerly secretary of legation to Mexico, with whom he said he was intimate, and who could, he said, give me much information on the subject of Mexican affairs. He concluded by remarking that our difficulties with Mexico never could be settled until we exhibited a strong force on her borders, and showed her that we were determined to demand and to have our rights. . . .

James K. Polk, *Diary* (Chicago, 1910), I. 224-230 *passim*.

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5. Manifest Destiny as Applied to Oregon (1846)

By REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT C. WINTHROP

A Massachusetts man. Later speaker of the House. An interesting early occurrence of the term "Manifest destiny."

LET me not be misunderstood, Mr. Speaker. I have no hesitation in saying that I honestly think, upon as dispassionate a review of the correspondence as I am capable of, that the American title to Oregon is the best now in existence. But I honestly think, also, that the whole character of the title is too confused and complicated to justify any arbitrary and exclusive assertions of right, and that a compromise of the question is every way consistent with reason, interest, and honor. There is one element in our title, however, which I confess that I have not named, and to which I may not have done entire justice. I mean that new revelation of right, which has been designated as the right of our manifest destiny to spread over this whole continent. It has been openly avowed, in a leading administration journal, that this, after all, is our best and strongest title; one so clear, so preëminent, and so indisputable, that if Great Britain had all our other titles in addition to her own, they would weigh nothing against it. The right of

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our manifest destiny! There is a right for a new chapter in the law of nations; or rather in the special laws of our own country; for I suppose the right of a manifest destiny to spread, will not be admitted to exist in any nation except the universal Yankee nation! This right of our manifest destiny, Mr. Speaker, reminds me of another source of title which is worthy of being placed beside it. Spain and Portugal, we all know, in the early part of the sixteenth century laid claim to the jurisdiction of this whole northern continent of America. Francis I is related to have replied to this pretension, that he should like to see the clause in *Adam's Will*, in which their exclusive title was found. Now, Sir, I look for an early reproduction of this idea. I have no doubt that if due search be made, a copy of this primeval instrument, with a clause giving us the whole of Oregon, can be somewhere hunted up. Perhaps it may be found in that same Illinois cave in which the Mormon Testament has been discovered. I commend the subject to the attention of those in that neighborhood, and will promise to withdraw all my opposition to giving notice or taking possession, whenever the right of our manifest destiny can be fortified by the provisions of our great First Parent's last will and testament. . . .

Robert C. Winthrop, *Addresses and Speeches* (Boston, 1852), 489-490.

6. The Columbia the Road to India (1846)

By SENATOR THOMAS HART BENTON

Benton was one of the few men who foresaw the significance of the Pacific.

I SAY to my fellow-citizens: Through the valley of the Columbia, lies the North American road to India. Twenty-eight years ago I wrote something on this head, and published it. A quarter of a century of experience and observation has given me nothing to detract from what I then wrote—nothing to add, except as derived from the progress of the arts, and especially omnipotent steam. The trade of the East has always been the richest jewel in the diadem of commerce. All nations, in all ages, have sought it; and those which obtained it, or even a share of it, attained the highest degree of opulence, refinement, and power. The routes through which it flowed fertilized deserts, and built up cities and kingdoms amidst the desolation of rocks and sands. . . .

The effect of the arrival of the Caucasian, or white race, on the western coast of America, opposite the eastern coast of Asia, remains to be mentioned among the benefits which the settlement of the Columbia will produce; and that a benefit, not local to us, but general and universal

to the human race. Since the dispersion of man upon earth, I know of no human event, past or to come, which promises a greater and more beneficent change upon earth than the arrival of the van of the Caucasian race (the Celtic-Anglo-Saxon division) upon the border of the sea which washes the shore of the eastern Asia. The Mongolian, or yellow race, is there, four hundred millions in number, spreading almost to Europe, a race once the foremost of the human family in the arts of civilization, but torpid and stationary for thousands of years. It is a race far above the Ethiopian, or black—above the Malay, or brown (if we must admit five races),—and above the American Indian, or red; it is a race far above all these, but still far below the white; and, like all the rest, must receive an impression from the superior race whenever they come in contact. 2

It would seem that the White race alone received the divine command, to subdue and replenish the earth! for it is the only race that has obeyed it—the only one that hunts out new and distant lands, and even a New World, to subdue and replenish. Starting from western Asia, taking Europe for their field, and the sun for their guide, and leaving the Mongolians behind, they arrived, after many ages, on the shores of the Atlantic, which they lit up with the lights of science and religion, and adorned with the useful and the elegant arts. Three and a half cen-

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turies ago this race, in obedience to the great command, arrived in the New World, and found new lands to subdue and replenish. For a long time it was confined to the border of the new field (I now mean the Celtic-Anglo-Saxon division); and even fourscore years ago the philosophic Burke was considered a rash man because he said the English colonists would top the Alleghanies, and descend into the valley of the Mississippi, and occupy without parchment if the Crown refused to make grants of land.

What was considered a rash declaration eighty years ago is old history in our young country, at this day. Thirty years ago I said the same thing of the Rocky Mountains and the Columbia: it was ridiculed then; it is becoming history to-day. The van of the Caucasian race now top the Rocky Mountains, and spread down to the shores of the Pacific. In a few years a great population will grow up there, luminous with the accumulated lights of European and American civilization. Their presence in such a position cannot be without its influence upon eastern Asia. The sun of civilization must shine across the sea: socially and commercially, the van of the Caucasians, and the rear of the Mongolians, must intermix. They must talk together, and trade together, and marry together. Commerce is a great civilizer—social intercourse as great—and marriage greater. The white and yel-

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low races can marry together, as well as eat and trade together. Moral and intellectual superiority will do the rest: the white race will take the ascendant, elevating what is susceptible of improvement—wearing out what is not. Civilization, or extinction, has been the fate of all people who have found themselves in the track of the advancing whites, and civilization, always the preference of the whites, has been pressed as an object, while extinction has followed as a consequence of its resistance. The black and the red races have often felt their ameliorating influence. The yellow race, next to themselves in the scale of mental and moral excellence, and in the beauty of form, once their superiors in the useful and elegant arts, and in learning, and still respectable though stationary; this race cannot fail to receive a new impulse from the approach of the whites, improved so much since so many ages ago they left the western borders of Asia. The apparition of the van of the Caucasian race, rising upon them in the east after having left them on the west, and after having completed the circumnavigation of the globe, must wake up and reanimate the torpid body of old Asia. Our position and policy will commend us to their hospitable reception: political considerations will aid the action of social and commercial influences. Pressed upon by the great powers of Europe—the same that press upon us—

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they must in our approach hail the advent of friends, not of foes—of benefactors, not of invaders. The moral and intellectual superiority of the white race will do the rest: and thus, the youngest people, and the newest land, will become the reviver and the regenerator of the oldest.

William M. Meigs, *Life of Thomas Hart Benton* (Phila., 1904), 308-310 *passim*.

7. Looking John Bull in the Eye (1846)

By PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK

(See note above, p. 26.) A leaf from Polk's experience in negotiations over Oregon.

THE conversation then turned on California, on which I remarked that Great Britain had her eye on that country and intended to possess it if she could, but that the people of the U. S. would not willingly permit California to pass into the possession of any new colony planted by Great Britain or any foreign monarchy, and that in reasserting Mr. Monroe's doctrine, I had California & the fine bay of San Francisco as much in view as Oregon. Col. Benton agreed that no Foreign Power ought to be permitted to colonize California, any more than they would be to colonize Cuba. As long as Cuba remained in the

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possession of the present Government we would not object, but if a powerful foreign power was about to possess it, we would not permit it. On the same footing we would place California.

Col. B. in the course of the conversation stated the fact that the British Hudson's Bay Company had now 20 Forts on Frazier's River.

Some conversation occurred concerning Capt. Fremont's expedition, and his intention to visit California before his return. Col. B. expressed the opinion that Americans would settle on the Sacramento River and ultimately hold the country. The conversation on the subject of Foreign Colonization closed by a general remark that no new Foreign Colony could be permitted on any part of the North American Continent, on which there seemed to be an agreement. Col. B. made no dissent to the proposition, but I was left in doubt whether he intended to include in it the country on Frazer's River, now occupied by British posts, but I inclined to the opinion that he did not intend that the principle should apply to the country watered by that River & North of 49° of North Latitude.

The conversation closed very pleasantly. The first rough draft of my message to Congress on the Oregon question, which I had finished to-day, lay on my table when Col. B. came into my office, but I did not state the fact to him.

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It embraced, written out, the views the substance of which I expressed in the conversation I have detailed with Col. Benton. . . .

Mr. Black, who is a member of the Ho. of Repts. from South Carolina, after making an apology for calling on the Sabbath, which was the importance of the subject about which he wished to converse. He then introduced the Oregon Question, and expressed his apprehension & belief that the question of the notice to terminate the joint occupation under the Convention of 1827, would produce a serious split in the Democratic party in Congress. He said the North Western members were for the notice, were excited, and he feared would act rashly and imprudently, and that Mr. Calhoun and a portion of the Southern members were against the notice. . . . I told him that my opinions were contained in my message, that they had been well considered, and that I had not changed them; that I had recommended the Notice and thought it ought to be given. I remarked to him that the only way to treat John Bull was to look him straight in the eye; that I considered a bold & firm course on our part the pacific one; that if Congress faltered or hesitated in their course, John Bull would immediately become arrogant and more grasping in his demands; & that such had been the history of the Brittish Nation in all their contests with other Powers for the last

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two hundred years. I remarked to him that I had said in my message that if the wisdom of Congress could devise any better plan to maintain our rights in Oregon than I had suggested, that I would heartily co-operate with them. The whole Oregon subject was discussed in a lengthy conversation. . . . Mr. Calhoun, who is probably becoming uneasy at his position on the Oregon question and may be desirous to extricate himself from it, though this is more an inference than any evidence of the fact derived from Mr. Black's conversation. . . .

Polk, *Diary* (Chicago, 1910), I. 71-156 *passim*.

8. Grasping at Mexican Territory (1847)

By SENATOR JOHN M. BERRIEN

A Georgian and a cabinet official under Jackson. A disclaimer of expansionist intentions in behalf of the South.

Now, he asked Senators, with the understanding of the object to which these three millions of money were to be applied, in the attainment of a cession of New Mexico and Upper California—he asked them to cast their eye on the map of Mexico, to see what portion of her territory it was thus intended to wrest from her. Why, New Mexico and upper California embraced one-third

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or more of the republic of Mexico; and this was the grasp we propose to make on her territory, if she will yield it to us by negotiation, on this money being applied to the payment of her armies, that they may coerce her into submission. He asked them, looking at the extent of the grasp which was proposed to be made on the territory of a sister republic, to answer him as men, as American Senators, and as Christian men, if this consisted with our national honor, and with the national interests of the people of the United States? Did it consist with the national honor? Why, we stand at the head of the free governments on earth. That proud position has been attained for us by the gallantry of our forefathers, by their fidelity to their country, by their preservation of the public faith, by an adherence to both national and individual honor.

And what is Mexico? A neighboring republic, comparatively feeble, forming herself upon the plan of our Constitution, introduced by us into the family of nations, and recognised by us as a sister republic. We have a population of twenty millions—double that of Mexico. We are the superior of Mexico in every respect, either in peace or war. This is true of all our resources of every description. We have a stable, permanent government. The voice of authority issuing from this capital is heard and obeyed in the most distant corner of this republic. Mexico is enfeebled,

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distracted, borne down by the strife of contending military rulers, until she is reduced to a condition that we are about to found an act of legislation upon—the assumption that she has not the strength to execute. And it is on a sister republic, thus in the magnitude of our strength, and in contemplation of her weakness, that we are about to advance to wrest from her a third of her territory, and appropriate it as indemnity to ourselves for the expenses which we have incurred in the vindication of our national honor.

In his humble judgment, such an act would be a violation of the national honor, far more to be deplored than defeat in the most sanguinary contest. That might be remedied—promptly remedied by the gallantry of our army. But what time, what bravery under heaven could expiate the blot which would stand upon the fair escutcheon of the country, if this strong, this powerful nation, were to avail herself of the distracted condition of a neighboring republic to gratify, not her desire to vindicate her national honor, but her lust for the acquisition of territory? . . .

When you get these provinces, what will you do with them? Will you remove the existing population that settle in the West, and populate them by emigrants from the United States? That may not be. You cannot do it without violating every principle of the law of nations—every principle which has been recognised by your own courts

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of justice. Whether these territories be acquired by conquest or by purchase, the moment they pass under your domination their inhabitants become the objects of, and are entitled to, your protection.

What next, then? If you must protect this people and the territory which they inhabit, will you govern them as provinces? Will you send your governors of provinces to superintend and protect them? On what principle will you govern them? On what page of the Constitution do you find your authority? Whence—by what principle of analogy—do you derive your authority to govern these extensive territories as provinces? What next? If you may not depopulate them—if you may not govern them as provinces—will you exercise the power given you under the Constitution, and obviously given while the view of the framers of it was confined within the territorial limits of the then United States? Will you exercise the power of governing them as territories, and, of course, entitle them to the privilege of being incorporated as States of the Union, when they shall have attained the requisite number of inhabitants? Are you willing to put your birth-right in the keeping of the mongrel races who inhabit these territories by incorporating them into the Federal Union? . . . We cannot, consistently with the Constitution, govern it as an independent province. We cannot, consistently with

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what we owe to ourselves, put it into a condition to be incorporated with the American Union. But suppose you could: Do not you bring with it that question which more than any other menaces the duration and the permanence of this Union? Do you believe that any treaty which may be negotiated with Mexico can receive the constitutional sanction of this body, leaving the question of slavery open? Do you believe it can receive the constitutional sanction of this body excluding slavery? Do you believe it can receive the constitutional sanction of this body, permitting slavery? . . . The process is easy—it is simple—it is undesirable. On the question of the admission of this territory—if you were to govern it as a territory, with a view to its subsequent admission, when the number of its population would justify that procedure—on the question of its admission as a State, the numerical superiority of the free States would hold us in chains. We may not hope to secure to our constituents any right to participate in the benefits of such an acquisition, unless we agree to surrender, in advance, that portion of our property over which we have the guarantee of the Constitution.

It then especially behooved southern Senators to oppose themselves to the acquisition of territory in any form, because, as it is quite certain that no territory will be acquired by treaty in which the right to exercise their domestic institu-

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tions will be stipulated, and inasmuch as the territory acquired by a treaty which would leave that an open question, will inevitably result in their exclusion—I say, in my humble judgment, and speaking as a southern Senator representing a southern State, that the duty of the South—the interests of the South—the safety of the South—demands that we should oppose ourselves to any and to every acquisition of territory. But the appeal is not merely to southern Senators, but to American Senators from whatever quarter of this Union they may come. The appeal is to them to exclude from the national councils this direful question. The acquisition of territory must bring before us, with accumulated force, a question which now menaces the permanence of this Union. It cannot be that southern men can silently acquiesce in the denial to them of a common right insured in the Constitution of the United States. If we have a right to the acquisition of territory—if that acquisition is made by the common effort of all the States, then all the States are alike entitled to participate in the benefits which result from such an acquisition. But if the inevitable tendency of such an acquisition be as I have described it, then we must be excluded from such a participation in the benefits of acquisition. In that case, one of two things remains—to assert, at whatever hazard, our rights, and the rights of our constituents; or to give a renewed unexam-

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pled manifestation of our devotion to the bond of our Federal Union, by submitting to this inequality of distribution in the acquisitions of our common country. . . .

Congressional Globe, 29th Cong., 2d sess. (Washington, 1847), 329-330.

9. Effect of the Blockade of Mexico on Foreign Trade (1847)

By PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK

(See note above, p. 26.) Similar questions have arisen several times since; and parts of Mexico have several times been occupied by United States troops.

THE Secretary of State informed me that Mr. Pakenham, the British minister, had applied to him on behalf of a British mining company in Mexico to relax the blockade of the port of Vera Cruz so far as to permit them to import a steam engine for the use of the company. He expressed his opinion that the relaxation should be done. The Secretary of the Treasury expressed the same opinion. I informed Mr. Buchanan that similar privileges might be asked by foreigners of other nations domiciled in Mexico, for permission to import other articles suited to their interest or convenience, & that there was danger that offense would be taken by the nations to which they belonged if their ap-

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plications were not granted. I inclined to the opinion that the strict blockade which we had declared & were enforcing should be adhered to. I informed him that I desired him to refer me to the laws of nations on the subject. He seemed to be impatient at my doubts, & became animated in insisting upon it that I should act at once. I refused positively to do so, & required him to refer me to the public law on the subject before I would act. The subject was fully discussed. . . .

Polk, *Diary* (Chicago, 1910), II. 387.

10. Mexicans Ask General Scott to be Their Dictator (1847)

By FRANCIS LIEBER

A German immigrant, who became President of the University of South Carolina, and a writer of searching books on American Government. The incident is undoubted.

"My friend," said General Scott, "has adverted to the proposition seen floating about in the newspapers. I have nowhere seen it correctly stated that an offer was made to me to remain in that country and govern it. The impression which generally prevails, that the proposition emanated from congress, is an erroneous one. The overture was made to me privately, by

Francis Lieber

men in and out of office, of great influence—five of whom, of enormous wealth, offered to place the *bonus* of one million of dollars (mentioned below) to my credit in any bank I might name, either in New York or London. On taking possession of the city of Mexico, our system of government and police was established, which, as the inhabitants themselves confessed, gave security—for the first time perfect and absolute security—to person and property. About two-fifths of all the branches of government, including nearly a majority of the members of congress and the executive, were quite desirous of having that country annexed to ours. They knew that, upon the ratification of the treaty of peace, nineteen out of twenty of the persons belonging to the Mexican army would stand disbanded, and would be absolutely free from all obligations to remain in the army another moment. It was entirely true of all the new regiments called regulars, of all the volunteers, and eight out of ten of the rank and file of the old regiments. Thirty-three and a third per cent. were to be added to the pay of the American officers and men retained as the nucleus of the Mexican army. When the war was over, the government overwhelmed me with reinforcements, after there was no possibility of fighting another battle. When the war commenced, we had but one-fourth of the force which we needed. The Mexicans

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knew that the men in my army would be entitled to their discharge. They supposed, if they could obtain my services, I would retain these twelve or fifteen thousand men, and that I could easily obtain one hundred thousand men from home. The hope was, that it would immediately cause annexation. They offered me one million of dollars as a bonus, with a salary of \$250,000 per annum, and five responsible individuals to become security. They expected that annexation would be brought about in a few years, or, if not, that I could organize the finances, and straighten the complex affairs of that government. It was understood that nearly a majority of congress was in favor of annexation, and that it was only necessary to publish a pronunciamiento to secure the object. We possessed all the fortresses, all the arms of the country, their cannon foundries and powder manufactories, and had possession of their ports of entry, and might easily have held them in our possession if this arrangement had gone into effect. A published pronunciamiento would have brought congress right over to us, and, with these fifteen thousand Americans holding the fortresses of the country, all Mexico could not have disturbed us. We might have been there to this day, if it had been necessary. I loved my distant home. I was not in favor of the annexation of Mexico to my own country. Mexico has about eight millions of inhabitants,

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and out of these eight millions there are not more than one million who are of pure European blood. The Indians and mixed races constitute about seven millions. They are exceedingly inferior to our own. As a lover of my country, I was opposed to mixing up that race with our own. This was the first objection, on my part, to this proposition. May I plead some little love of home, which gave me the preference for the soil of my own country and its institutions? I came back to die under those institutions, and here I am. . . .

Francis Lieber, *Civil Liberty and Self Government* (Phila., 1859), 330-332 note.

II. Who Made the Mexican War? (1848)

By REPRESENTATIVE ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Lincoln as member of Congress had the opportunity to criticize the excuses for the Mexican War put forth by Polk and his friends.

Now, sir, for the purpose of obtaining the very best evidence as to whether Texas had actually carried her revolution to the place where the hostilities of the present war commenced, let the President answer the interrogatories I proposed, as before mentioned, or some other similar ones. Let him answer fully, fairly, and candidly. Let

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him answer with facts and not with arguments. Let him remember he sits where Washington sat, and so remembering, let him answer as Washington would answer. As a nation should not, and the Almighty will not, be evaded, so let him attempt no evasion—no equivocation. And, if, so answering, he can show that the soil was ours where the first blood of the war was shed,—that it was not within an inhabited country, or, if within such, that the inhabitants had submitted themselves to the civil authority of Texas or of the United States, and that the same is true of the site of Fort Brown,—then I am with him for his justification. . . .

But if he can not or will not do this,—if on any pretense or no pretense he shall refuse or omit it—then I shall be fully convinced of what I more than suspect already—that he is deeply conscious of being in the wrong; that he feels the blood of this war, like the blood of Abel, is crying to Heaven against him; that originally having some strong motive—what, I will not stop now to give my opinion concerning—to involve the two countries in a war, and trusting to escape scrutiny by fixing the public gaze upon the exceeding brightness of military glory,—that attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood—that serpent's eye that charms to destroy,—he plunged into it, and has swept on and on till, disappointed in his calculation of the ease with

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which Mexico might be subdued, he now finds himself he knows not where. . . .

Having it now settled that territory indemnity is the only object, we are urged to seize, by legislation here, all that he was content to take a few months ago, and the whole province of Lower California to boot, and to still carry on the war—to take all we are fighting for, and still fight on. Again, the President is resolved under all circumstances to have full territorial indemnity for the expenses of the war; but he forgets to tell us how we are to get the excess after those expenses shall have surpassed the value of the whole of the Mexican territory. So again, he insists that the separate national existence of Mexico shall be maintained; but he does not tell us how this can be done, after we shall have taken all her territory. . . . How are we to make anything out of these lands with this encumbrance on them? or how remove the encumbrance? I suppose no one would say we should kill the people, or drive them out, or make slaves of them; or confiscate their property. How, then, can we make much out of this part of the territory? If the prosecution of the war has in expenses already equaled the better half of the country, how long its future prosecution will be in equaling the less valuable half is not a speculative but a practical question, pressing closely upon us. And yet it is a question which

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the President seems never to have thought of. As to the mode of terminating the war and securing peace, the President is equally wandering and indefinite. First, it is to be done by a more vigorous prosecution of the war in the vital parts of the enemy's country; and after apparently talking himself tired on this point, the President drops down into a half-despairing tone, and tells us that "with a people distracted and divided by contending factions, and a government subject to constant changes by successive revolutions, the continued success of our arms may fail to secure a satisfactory peace." Then he suggests the propriety of wheedling the Mexican people to desert the counsels of their own leaders, and, trusting in our protestations, to set up a government from which we can secure a satisfactory peace; telling us that "this may become the only mode of obtaining such a peace." But soon he falls into doubt of this too; and then drops back onto the already half-abandoned ground of "more vigorous prosecution." All this shows that the President is in nowise satisfied with his own positions. First he takes up one, and in attempting to argue us into it he argues himself out of it, then seizes another and goes through the same process, and then, confused at being able to think of nothing new, he snatches up the old one again, which he has some time before cast off. His mind, taxed beyond its

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power, is running hither and thither, like some tortured creature on a burning surface, finding no position on which it can settle down to be at ease.

Again, it is a singular omission in this message that it nowhere intimates when the President expects the war to terminate. . . . As I have before said, he knows not where he is. He is a bewildered, confounded, and miserably perplexed man. God grant he may be able to show there is not something about his conscience more painful than all his mental perplexity.

Abraham Lincoln, *Early Speeches* (N. Y., 1907), 128-133 *passim*.

12. Refusal to Annex All Mexico (1848)

By PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK

(See note above, p. 45.) This extract from Polk's *Diary* makes clear that he probably prevented the absorption of the whole of Mexico.

MONDAY, 21st February, 1848.—I saw no company this morning. At 12 O'Clock the Cabinet met; all the members present. I made known my decision upon the Mexican Treaty, which was that under all the circumstances of the case, I would submit it [to] the Senate for ratification, with a recommendation to strike out the 10th

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article. I assigned my reasons for my decision. They were, briefly, that the treaty conformed on the main question of limits & boundary to the instructions given to Mr. Trist in April last, and that though, if the treaty was now to be made, I should demand more territory, perhaps to make the Sierra Madra the line, yet it was doubtful whether this could be ever obtained by the consent of Mexico. I looked, too, to the consequences of its rejection. A majority of one branch of Congress is opposed to my administration; they have falsely charged that the war was brought on and is continued by me with a view to the conquest of Mexico; and if I were now to reject a Treaty made upon my own terms, as authorized in April last, with the unanimous approbation of the Cabinet, the probability is that Congress would not grant either men or money to prosecute the war. Should this be the result, the army now in Mexico would be constantly wasting and diminishing in numbers, and I might at last be compelled to withdraw them, and thus loose the two Provinces of New Mexico & Upper California, which were ceded to the U. S. by this Treaty. Should the opponents of my administration succeed in carrying the next Presidential election, the great probability is that the country would lose all the advantages secured by this Treaty. I adverted to the immense value of Upper California; and concluded

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by saying that if I were now to reject my own terms, as offered in April last, I did not see how it was possible for my administration to be sustained. Mr. Buchanan repeated his objections to the Treaty. He wanted more territory, and would not be content with less than the line of the Sierra Madre, in addition to the Provinces secured in this Treaty. He admitted that the fact that Mr. Trist had been recalled before he signed the Treaty ought to have no influence upon the decision to be made. I deemed it to be my duty to remind Mr. Buchanan of his total change of opinion and position on the subject. I told him that I remembered well that a Cabinet meeting which took place on the night of the day on which war was declared (13th of May, 1846) or about that time, he had been opposed to acquiring any Mexican territory. I told him that at that meeting he had prepared and read in Cabinet a circular which he proposed to address, as Secretary of State, to our ministers and consuls abroad, authorizing them to inform the Governments at which they were accredited, that we did not desire or intend to acquire any Mexican territory, that our only desire or object was to protect Texas and secure indemnity to our injured claimants (see this diary of that date for a more full statement). I told him that I had objected to his despatch, that a discussion took place which I supposed he and the Cabinet re-

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membered; & that I had written a paragraph at my table as a substitute for his; & that at the close of that Cabinet meeting he had taken from the table his draft of his dispatch and the paragraph which I prepared with him, and the next day modified his despatch according to my instructions. I told him that up to last April he had been opposed to acquiring any territory, and that when the instructions were given to Mr. Trist in April, he had fully concurred in them. I told him I repeated these facts because it was proper that we should understand our relative positions on the subject, formerly and now. The rest of the Cabinet were silent. Mr. Buchanan replied that I might have gone further and added that he had been opposed to the military expedition to the City of Mexico (as I remember he was) but that he was overruled, that since April we had spent much money and lost much blood, and that he was not now satisfied with this Treaty. He added that he gave his advice as a member of the Cabinet that the Treaty should be rejected, because that was now his opinion. I cannot help laboring under the conviction that the true reason of Mr. Buchanan's present course is that he is now a candidate for the Presidency, and he does not wish to incur the displeasure of those who are in favour of the conquest of all Mexico. . . .

13. The Glory of the States in the
Union (1848)

By GOVERNOR JOHN J. CRITTENDEN

A Kentuckian, member of Tyler's cabinet and later advocate of compromise in crisis of 1861. Always a patriot.

UNDER the auspices of our State governments to take care of our domestic concerns, and of the general government to guard our national and external rights, we may confidently look forward to a future full of everything that can gratify the hearts of a civilized and free people.

It is in this general result of the operation of the American system of government that the States feel and know that they are important parts of a great whole; and that they have other cares, interests, and duties which claim their attention beyond those that are merely local and peculiar to themselves respectively. If we could act in the right spirit, and under the influence of proper sentiments, we must habitually contemplate ourselves and our State as members of the great national Union. It is in and by that Union that we are known among the nations of the earth. It is in that Union that we are respected by the world. And under the joint protection of the government of the Union and the government of the States, we have the amplest securities that patriotism and wisdom can

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furnish for freedom and prosperity. The union of the States is not only indispensable to our greatness, but it is a guarantee for our republican form of government. With the preservation of that Union and the Constitution by which it is established, and laws by which it is maintained, our dearest interests are indissolubly blended. An experience of near sixty years, while it has confirmed the most sanguine hopes of our patriotic fathers who framed it, has taught us its inestimable value. Its value will be above all price to us so long as we are fit for liberty, and it will fail only when we become unworthy of it. No form of government can secure liberty to a degenerate people. Kentucky, situated in the heart of the Union, must and will exercise a powerful influence on its destiny. Devotion to the Union is the common sentiment of her people. I do not know a man within the limits of the State who does not entertain it. We all feel that we can safely rely upon a Union which has sustained us so triumphantly in the trials of peace and war; and we entertain no fears from those who have a common interest in it with ourselves. . . . The dissolution of the Union can never be regarded—ought never to be regarded—as a *remedy*, but as the *consummation of the greatest evil that can befall us*.

Kentucky, devoted to that Union, will look to it with filial confidence, and to the utmost of

John J. Crittenden

her might, will maintain and defend it. We let no meditations or calculations on any sectional or other confederacy beguile us to the point of weakening our attachment to the Union. Our relations and our attachments are with and to *all the STATES*; and we are unwilling to impair them by any entangling engagements with a *part*.

We are prouder of our rank as a member of the United States than we could be of any sectional or geographical position that may be assigned us. We date our prosperity as a nation from the adoption of the Federal Constitution. From the government that it established we have derived unnumbered blessings, and whatever of evil has occurred in its administration bears no proportion to its benefits.

In proof of the foregoing sentiment we may appeal to our past history. We have seen measures of national policy which we consider of vital importance to our welfare perish in the conflicts of parties; and other systems, deemed by us inimical to our best interests, prevail. Yet we did not falter in our allegiance to our common government, but waited with patience for the development of the conclusion to which a majority of the whole nation would ultimately arrive after a calm survey and experience of what would best promote the public good. . . .

Mrs. Chapman Coleman, *Life of John J. Crittenden* (Phila., 1871), I. 207-210 *passim*.

14. What a Soldier Gained from Service in Mexico? (1848)

By REUBEN DAVIS

A Mississippian, whose service in Mexico was not unlike that of later American soldiers.

UP to the time of my departure for Mexico, my life had been as tranquil and as free from enmities as was possible for a man of impulsive temperament, actively engaged in professional life, and with vivid political sympathies. I had enjoyed the support of many warm personal friends, and had made very few personal enemies. In taking command of new troops, without previous military training myself, I put myself in a position not only to make blunders, but to receive credit for blunders made by other people. For instance, I had no responsibility for the unfortunate selection of the camp near Vicksburg, where the men were exposed to mud and wet, and which produced much suffering and disease, but it was considered my fault. In the same way, our detention at New Orleans, where the men were encamped in a swamp, and the weather was frightful, and where we waited three weeks for transportation, was wholly beyond my power to prevent, but it was somehow put down to my want of experience.

These criticisms were oftenest made by peo-

Reuben Davis

ple at home, my own men being generally loyal to me. In my long absence I had suffered much, not only from the interruption of my professional career and the loss of political preferment, but from a long and wasting illness, which returned at intervals for years.

I had also gained much, in a more varied experience, wider knowledge of men, and the bringing out of new powers and faculties. Hitherto, my life had been given up chiefly to legal questions and expedients. During my military experience, I was thrown into contact with new difficulties and emergencies, and forced to exercise a different set of faculties altogether.

To change a man's occupation in life is to lift him out of one groove into another, and to develop a new quality of mental aptitudes and methods. I ought to have gained something by my experience in Mexico, for I paid a long price for it, besides the bitter disappointment of missing all the brilliant opportunities and glorious excitements of actual battle.

To have shared the glory of Buena Vista, or the charge at Monterey, or the march into the capital, would have been a balm for every woe, and an answer to each detractor. . . .

Reuben Davis, *Recollections of Mississippi* (Boston, 1890), 252-253.

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15. Raise Up the Lowly (1848)

By WILLIAM BROWN MACLAY

New York lawyer and congressman.

IN common with many better and wiser men, I have been penetrated with the profoundest melancholy at every contemplation of the poverty, and wretchedness, and crime to which so many seem hopelessly consigned, and which are especially observable in our large cities. Look at thousands of laborers, receiving what is barely sufficient to supply the animal wants of their nature, and with scarcely the hope that any future will ever dawn upon them which will find their condition materially improved! Look at the mechanic! With youth, and health, and employment, no man is more independent, or, perhaps, more happy. Yet how precarious the tenure by which he holds all these! What provision can he make for sickness and old age? Perhaps burdened with an increasing family, he can not regard each additional child as an additional blessing, but, harassed with undefined apprehensions of the future, the very sweets of domestic life are made bitter to him. Where are his opportunities for intellectual culture, to which a mind free from care and some degree of leisure are absolutely essential? Chained to a life of toil, few and far between are such opportunities, and

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he bequeaths to his offspring the same legacy of hardship and unrequited labor.

Yet the two classes of men here mentioned, the only producers of wealth, make up the bulk of society. Surely there must be some radical defect in its organization, requiring the application of some new principle to remove evils so great and so general. I believe this principle will be found, in part, in limiting the quantity of public land which each individual can purchase, confining such purchase only to such persons as become actual occupants of the soil, making the sum required for the purchase merely nominal and exempting the land thus acquired from alienation.

For the poverty which afflicts, and the crime which disgraces society, good men have at different times suggested different remedies. A system of education, so thorough as to reach all classes, has been proposed as one of these, and we have been told that by this instrumentality crime would be diminished, and wealth and happiness multiplied. But experience has shown that even this has proved delusive. Without referring to France, take the more remarkable case of Scotland, where, by an admirable system of parish schools, education is brought to the door of the humblest peasant. Yet, from the undisputed testimony of one of her own authors, the number of individuals charged with serious

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offenses is in England five times greater than it was thirty years ago, in Ireland six times, but in Scotland twenty-nine times.

No, my friend, to prevent crime, remove the causes which lead or impel to it. Develop in the working population the forethought and foresight by which poverty, is in most cases avoided. But who expects in the present artificial state of things to find these habits among those who (to use a coarse, but, alas! expressive phrase) "live from hand to mouth?" Who can expect to see a sacrifice of the present to the future, when, after the simplest wants are supplied, there is nothing left? It is, therefore, I sympathize deeply with your views, because they hold out to the working man a permanent object of attachment, well adapted to develop these habits—to level the inequalities of society—the fruitful source of so much misery—and to make our country the strongest in the world.

Within the life-time of many who are now alive, our country will have a population of one hundred millions, and this, too, by immigration and natural increase, and without reference being had to any future extension of the boundaries of our territory. With this lapse of time will come increased intelligence, and facilities for intercommunication. Now, imagine such a population organized into a great landed democracy, each man, who desired it, sitting under his own vine and

William Brown Maclay

fig-tree upon his own freehold! What diminution of crime! what increase of wealth! what diffused intelligence would then be exhibited! Such a country could behold with sympathy, but without apprehension, the social convulsions of other lands, and, in a military point of view, would be invincible to a world in arms.

We wonder at the feeble resistance made by the Roman empire to the barbarians of the North, who, under the command of him who has not been inaptly termed the "Scourge of God," threw down the fabric of its power. Our wonder ceases when the historian tells us that all Italy and Africa was in the hands of seventeen hundred great families, who cultivated the lands, thus monopolized, by slaves. Why should we expect the Roman of that day to fight? He had nothing to fight for. May we profit by such an example.

In all that constitutes a free government, this country has been justly regarded as in the vanguard of every other; but even here, where all power is in the hands of, and emanates from the people, the prejudices which we have inherited from our anti-democratic ancestors still exist; and there are not wanting those who ignorantly stigmatize, as agrarian and disorganizing, doctrines which are in consonance with the whole spirit of our government, and which must ultimately be engrafted upon the policy of

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the nation, from a regard to the well-being of its citizens and the perpetuity of free institutions. The truth is, we are behind many other nations in the application of our political power to social reform, and in much that relates to land gratuities, occupancy and limitation.

Henry G. Wheeler, *History of Congress* (N. Y., 1848), I. 233-235.

16. Bravery and Courage (1848)

By REVEREND HORACE BUSHNELL

A renowned Connecticut minister and able writer.

IN like manner, the passion of our race for war, and the eager admiration yielded to warlike exploits, are resolvable principally into the same fundamental cause. Mere ends and uses do not satisfy us. We must get above prudence and economy, into something that partakes of inspiration, be the cost what it may. Hence war, another and yet more magnificent counterfeit of play. Thus there is a great and lofty virtue that we call courage (*cour-age*), taking our name from the heart. It is the greatness of a great heart, the repose and confidence of a man whose soul is rested in truth and principle. Such a man has no ends ulterior to his duty,—duty itself is his end. He is in it therefore as in play, lives it as an inspiration. Lifted thus out of mere pru-

Horace Bushnell

dence and contrivance, he is also lifted above fear. Life to him is the outgoing of his great heart (*heart-age*), action from the heart. And because he now can die, without being shaken or perturbed by any of the dastardly feelings that belong to self-seeking and work, because he partakes of the impassibility of his principles, we call him a hero, regarding him as a kind of god, a man who has gone up into the sphere of the divine.

Then, since courage is a joy so high, a virtue of so great majesty, what could happen but that many will covet both the internal exaltation and the outward repute of it? Thus comes bravery, which is the counterfeit, or mock virtue. Courage is of the heart, as we have said; bravery is of the will. One is the spontaneous joy and repose of a truly great soul; the other, bravery, is after an end ulterior to itself, and, in that view, is but a form of work,—about the hardest work, too, I fancy, that some men undertake. What can be harder, in fact, than to act a great heart, when one has nothing but a will wherewith to do it?

Thus you will see that courage is above danger, bravery in it, doing battle on a level with it. One is secure and tranquil, the other suppresses agitation or conceals it. A right mind fortifies one, shame stimulates the other. Faith is the nerve of one, risk the plague and tremor of the other.

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For if I may tell you just here a very important secret, there be many that are called heroes who are yet without courage. They brave danger by their will, when their heart trembles. They make up in violence what they want in tranquillity, and drown the tumult of their fears in the rage of their passions. Enter the heart and you shall find, too often, a dastard spirit lurking in your hero. Call him still a brave man, if you will, only remember that he lacks courage.

No, the true hero is the great, wise man of duty,—he whose soul is armed by truth and supported by the smile of God,—he who meets life's perils with a cautious but tranquil spirit, gathers strength by facing its storms, and dies, if he is called to die, as a Christian victor at the post of duty. And if we must have heroes, and wars wherein to make them, there is no so brilliant war as a war with wrong, no hero so fit to be snug as he who has gained the bloodless victory of truth and mercy.

But if bravery be not the same as courage, still it is a very imposing and plausible counterfeit. The man himself is told, after the occasion is past, how heroically he bore himself, and when once his nerves have become tranquilized, he begins even to believe it. And since we cannot stay content in the dull, uninspired world of economy and work, we are as ready to see a hero as he to be one. Nay, we must

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have our heroes, as I just said, and we are ready to harness ourselves, by the million, to any man who will let us fight him out the name. Thus we find out occasions for war,—wrongs to be redressed, revenges to be taken, such as we may feign inspiration and play the great heart under. We collect armies, and dress up leaders in gold and high colors, meaning, by the brave look, to inspire some notion of a hero beforehand. Then we set the men in phalanxes and squadrons, where the personality itself is taken away, and a vast impersonal person called an army, a magnanimous and brave monster, is all that remains. The masses of fierce color, the glitter of steel, the dancing plumes, the waving flags, the deep throb of the music lifting every foot,—under these the living acres of men, possessed by the one thought of playing brave to-day, are rolled on to battle. Thunder, fire, dust, blood, groans,—what of these?—nobody thinks of these, for nobody dares to think till the day is over, and then the world rejoices to behold a new batch of heroes!

And this is the devil's play that we call war. We have had it going on ever since the old geologic era was finished. We are sick enough of the matter of it. We understand well enough that it is not good economy. But we cannot live on work. We must have courage, inspiration, greatness, play. Even the moral of our nature, that which is to weave us into social union with

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our kind before God, is itself thirsting after play; and if we cannot have it in good, why then let us have it in as good as we can. It is at least some comfort, that we do not mean quite as badly in these wars as some men say. We are not in love with murder, we are not simple tigers in feeling, and some of us come out of battle with kind and gentle qualities left. We only must have our play.

Note also this, that, since the metaphysics of fighting have been investigated, we have learned to make much of what we call the *moral* of the army; by which we mean the feeling that wants to play brave. Only it is a little sad to remember that this same moral, as it is called, is the true, eternal, moral nature of the man thus terribly perverted,—that which was designed to link him to his God and his kind, and ought to be the spring of his immortal inspirations. . . .

Duykinck, *Cyclopedia of American Literature* (N. Y., 1856), II. 398-399.

17. True Grandeur of Nations (1848)

By CHARLES SUMNER

From 1845 Sumner was a leading advocate of peace.

THERE is still another influence stimulating War, and interfering with the natural attractions of Peace: I refer to a selfish and exaggerated

Charles Sumner

prejudice of country, leading to physical aggrandizement and political exaltation at the expense of other countries, and in disregard of justice. Nursed by the literature of antiquity, we imbibe the sentiment of heathen patriotism. Exclusive love for the land of birth belonged to the religion of Greece and Rome. . . .

It is the policy of rulers to encourage this exclusive patriotism, and here they are aided by the examples of antiquity. I do not know that any one nation is permitted to reproach another with this selfishness. All are selfish. Men are taught to live, not for mankind, but only for a small portion of mankind. The pride, vanity, ambition, brutality even, which all rebuke in the individual, are accounted virtues, if displayed in the name of country. Among us the sentiment is active, while it derives new force from the point with which it has been expressed. An officer of our navy, one of the heroes nurtured by War, whose name has been praised in churches, going beyond all Greek, all Roman example, exclaimed, "*Our country, right or wrong,*"—a sentiment dethroning God and enthroning the Devil, whose flagitious character must be rebuked by every honest heart. How different was virtuous Andrew Fletcher, whose heroical uprightness, amidst the trials of his time, has become immortal in the saying, that he "would readily lose his life to *serve* his country, but would not do a base

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thing to *save* it." Better words, or more truly patriotic, were never uttered. "Our country, our whole country, and *nothing but our country*," are other delusive sounds, which, first falling from the lips of an eminent American orator, are often painted on banners, and echoed by innumerable multitudes. Cold and dreary, narrow and selfish would be this life, if *nothing but our country* occupied the soul,—if the thoughts that wander through eternity, if the infinite affections of our nature, were restrained to that place where we find ourselves by the accident of birth. . . .

Not that I love country less, but Humanity more, do I now and here plead the cause of a higher and truer patriotism. I cannot forget that we are men by a more sacred bond than we are citizens,—that we are children of a common Father more than we are Americans.

Thus do seeming diversities of nations—separated by accident of language, mountain, river, or sea—all disappear, and the multitudinous tribes of the globe stand forth as members of one vast Human Family, where strife is treason to Heaven, and all war is nothing else than *civil war*. In vain restrict this odious term, importing so much of horror, to the dissensions of a single community. It belongs also to feuds between nations. The soul trembles aghast in the contemplation of fields drenched with fraternal gore, where the happiness of homes is shivered by neighbors, and

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kinsman sinks beneath the steel nerved by a kinsman's hand. This is civil war, accursed forever in the calendar of Time. In the faithful record of the future, recognizing the True Grandeur of Nations, the Muse of History, inspired by a loftier justice and touched to finer sensibilities, will extend to Universal Man the sympathy now confined to country, and no war will be waged without arousing everlasting judgment.

C. Sumner, *Works* (Boston, 1875), I. 67-72 *passim*.

CHAPTER XXVI—SHADES OF DIS- UNION (1849-1852)

The Mexican War grew to be a great problem before the country. Nobody proposed that Texas, New Mexico, or California should be given back to Mexico, but the question remained whether slavery should be allowed in the whole of the new territory, in a part of it, or not at all. Congress had taken no action except to organize Oregon as a free territory. In 1849 California created itself into a free State, and that left New Mexico as the immediate fighting ground between the proslavery and antislavery forces. Some of the phases of this discussion are set forth in the pages following. In 1850 the whole question came to an issue over the proposed compromise by which the slave power was to have a fighting chance in the southern part of the great region then called New Mexico. Extracts from the speeches show the different points of view, and at the same time reveal the oratorical fire and the sense of patriotic appeal of the principal speakers. The doctrine put forward by some Southern leaders (including Calhoun) that slavery was not to be discussed in public or even in Congress, received its quietus in this discussion. After the compromise was adopted, public opinion quieted down and there came a brief period of quiet, well illustrated by the reception of Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, and the strongly favorable impression made on the minds of such highly gifted immigrants as Carl Schurz.



After a photograph reproduced in The Mentor.

I. Equality Before the Law (1849)

By CHARLES SUMNER

The doctrine here set forth is that now commonly accepted.

THE way is now prepared to consider the nature of Equality, as secured by the Constitution of Massachusetts. The Declaration of Independence, which followed the French Encyclopedia and the political writings of Rousseau, announces among self-evident truths, "*that all men are created equal*; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The Constitution of Massachusetts repeats the same truth in a different form, saying, in its first article: "*All men are born free and equal*, and have certain natural essential, and unalienable rights, among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties." Another article explains what is meant by Equality, saying: "No man, nor corporation or association of men, have

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any other title to obtain advantages, or particular and exclusive privileges, distinct from those of the community, than what arises from the consideration of services rendered to the public; and this title being in nature neither hereditary, nor transmissible to children, or descendants, or relations by blood, the idea of a man being born a magistrate, lawgiver, or judge is absurd and unnatural." This language, in its natural signification, condemns every form of inequality in civil and political institutions.

These declarations, though in point of time before the ampler declarations of France, may be construed in the light of the latter. Evidently, they seek to declare the same principle. They are declarations of *Rights*; and the language employed, though general in character, is obviously limited to those matters within the design of a declaration of *Rights*. And permit me to say, it is a childish sophism to adduce any physical or mental inequality in argument against Equality of Rights.

Obviously, men are not born equal in physical strength or in mental capacity, in beauty of form or health of body. Diversity or inequality in these respects is the law of creation. From this difference springs divine harmony. But this inequality is in no particular inconsistent with complete civil and political equality.

The equality declared by our fathers in 1776,

Charles Sumner

and made the fundamental law of Massachusetts in 1780, was *Equality before the Law*. Its object was to efface all political or civil distinctions, and to abolish all institutions founded upon *birth*. "All men are *created* equal," says the Declaration of Independence. "All men are *born* free and equal," says the Massachusetts Bill of Rights. These are not vain words. Within the sphere of their influence, no person can be *created*, no person can be *born*, with civil or political privileges not enjoyed equally by all his fellow-citizens; nor can any institution be established, recognizing distinction of birth. Here is the Great Charter of every human being drawing vital breath upon this soil, whatever may be his condition, and whoever may be his parents. He may be poor, weak, humble, or black—he may be of Caucasian, Jewish, Indian, or Ethiopian race,—he may be of French, German, English, or Irish extraction; but before the Constitution of Massachusetts all these distinctions disappear. He is not poor, weak, humble, or black; nor is he Caucasian, Jew, Indian, or Ethiopian; nor is he French, German, English, or Irish; he is a MAN, the equal of all his fellow-men. He is one of the children of the State, which, like an impartial parent, regards all its offspring with an equal care. To some it may justly allot higher duties, according to higher capacities; but it welcomes all to its equal hospitable board.

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The State, imitating the divine justice, is no respecter of persons.

Here nobility cannot exist, because it is a privilege from birth. But the same anathema which smites and banishes nobility must also smite and banish every form of discrimination founded on birth,—

"Quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses."

Charles Sumner, *Works* (Boston, 1875), II. 340-342.

2. A Southern Antislavery Argument (1849)

By CASSIUS M. CLAY

A cousin of Henry Clay, who carried on an anti-slavery propaganda in Kentucky for many years. Later minister to Russia.

IF there was such a thing as evil in the world, slavery was an evil. If there was such a thing as justice among men, then justice required the liberation of the slave; and, as to rights: "The greatest of all rights, was the right of a man to himself." If God governed the world by general laws for the greatest happiness of all his creatures, I was in the right direction of the Divine will. If there ever was a Special Providence inspiring the human soul, now it should be felt. Every human thought and act tells in the great

Cassius M. Clay

destiny of the race, as molecules of water make up the ocean; so each individual is an essential part of that force which directs all to the great ends of our earthly existence. The inspired Scriptures and natural law leading in the same direction, it only remained for me to go in the path of duty, to sow the seed of good fruit. The results were in the regions of the unknown, but the end was with God.

These were the thoughts which were ever present with me in so many trying scenes; and, as Cyrus, before the great battle which decided the fate of Babylon and the Persian Empire, drew up his army and sacrificed to the gods, and thus filled his men with faith and moral power, so I went to my solitary struggles leaning confidently upon the arm of the Omnipotent one.

Never shall I forget the emotions of that day. Before the destruction of the forests, the spring was earlier than now. But it was now about the middle of April. The buds were more than half swollen into leaf; the blue grass was so rich in green as to assume that peculiar color which in Kentucky only seen gives it that famous name. The plowmen were whistling in the fields; and the girls and boys, white and black, in the gardens, were sending out peals of laughter and merry voices in their pleasant work. In crossing the Kentucky River I was brought face to face with its bold cliffs of limestone and its banks

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covered with wild-flowers and wild grapevines, and the dog-wood and red-bud in bloom. The fish were playing in the clear waters; and the redbirds and orioles and thrushes, and other songsters, were building their nests, and pouring forth their mingled voices in one universal jubilation! I could but exclaim, with Byron: "Beautiful! how beautiful is all this visible world!" It reminded me of my earlier days—so many spent in these same ever lovely "hills and dales." Now they were more beautiful than ever. It might be "the last" to me "of earth!" "Our life is a false nature. It is not in the harmony of things—this hard decree—this uneradicable taint of sin!"

How strangely is the mortal and the immortal blended! How these earthly ties held me from my noble aspirations! Why should I give up all self-enjoyment for others' happiness! Why not leave the wronged and the wrong-doer to remorseless fate! Never before was I so shattered in my purposes! Could I, with all my sins, be the protégé of a sin-hating God? Might I not die the death which the fool dieth at last? Then again my nobler nature revived. Had I not stood unharmed under the most depressing circumstances? Had I not been victorious against overwhelming odds? Why should I not hope? If I stood born of two natures, who made them but God! So, from the unseeming earth spring all the glories

of animal and vegetable life! The rose-tree strikes its roots into the very cesspools, but its flowers are bathed in the beauty of eternal sunshine! So strengthened, I went on with a security and a courage which nothing on earth could move.

Thus filled with final resolve, I reached at night-fall my destined village. There was but one hotel, standing by itself, without trees, except a few scraggy locusts, and without a fence. But the landlord was kind; my horse was cared for, and a palatable dinner and supper combined was provided and fully enjoyed.

On inquiring about the gentlemen who had invited me to speak, I learned that they had left the county. Many reflections rushed upon my mind; and the departure of my two friends was no favorable omen.

In these primitive times there was a sawed log placed under the trees as a stand for the wash-pan, and a large towel of coarse flax, or hemp, cloth used in common. I had walked down stairs without my coat; and, of course, unarmed, was washing, when a half dozen men came up, and said: "Is this Cassius M. Clay?" "Yes." "Well, we have some resolutions here, passed in public meeting of our citizens, which we, as their committee, are directed to hand to you." I read them. They were in the usual style, speaking of the dangers of incendiary talk

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about slavery; and warning me that if spoke it would be at my own peril! I said: "Gentlemen, I come here by the invitation of two of your citizens; but, with or without, such request, I stand upon my constitutional rights to discuss any subject whatever that pleases me. Say to your people, that I shall address them at the hour published at the court-house." So, bowing, they took their leave, and I went on washing.

During all the forenoon not a person called to see me, nor did any guest put up there. The truth is, I was as great an object of terror and avoidance as if I had come with cholera into the town.

The court-house, a fairly large brick building, was on the same struggling common with my hotel; but it was enclosed with a post-and-rail fence, and surrounded with locust trees. The day was warm and pleasant; and, hours before the time of speaking, the court-house was crowded to its greatest capacity, and many had climbed into the windows and filled many of the nearest trees, like black-birds at roost. At the hour named, looking closely to my two revolvers, and having them carefully near the mouth of my carpet-bag, with my Bowie-knife concealed in my belt, I walked alone to the court-house. By this time the crowd pressed to the very gate; but as I entered, they opened a lane as I advanced, no one saying a word. The same lane allowed

Cassius M. Clay

me to pass into the court-room. There were three chairs on a raised platform, or dais, and a small balustrade, a few feet high around these seats. Two of the chairs were empty, but the central one was occupied by a most remarkable man. He was a giant in frame, about sixty years of age, but then as fresh and vigorous apparently as a man of thirty-five years. I thought to myself, if you are to be my antagonist, I shall have a hard time of it. The whole audience was as still as if there had been but myself there; each looking excited and pale, as men who are on the eve of action. I walked steadily to the vacant seat, and sat down with my carpet-sack by my side, and began to feel for my notes, which I generally laid on the stand, but rarely ever used.

Wash (for such was his name,) rose up, and said: "I understand that this is Cash Clay," motioning his hand toward me, without looking at me. "You all know who I am. The boys who went to Mexico all say that Clay was their friend in and out of prison, standing by the soldiers, and dividing everything with them. I had no hand in the public meeting held here. But this I do say, that the man who fights for the country has a right to speak about the country. As I said, you all know who I am. I have lived here on Salt River all my life. I have forty children and grand-children, and they are all here. The Salt River Tigers were out in Mexico;

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and they are here, too. Now, we will stand by Clay, or die!" and down he sat.

A great load was lifted from my shoulders. That spirit of love of country and fair play, which I had hoped to propitiate by going to Mexico, was now realized. I spoke boldly for two hours, and there was not an angry interruption; but, on the contrary, frequent and hearty appreciation, which could not be entirely suppressed. So ended the first anti-slavery speech.

Cassius M. Clay, *Life* (Cincinnati, 1886), I. 179-183.

3. American Pride in Country and in Government (1849)

By ALEXANDER MACKAY

An English journalist who made a stay in the United States.

SOME allowance, however, should be made for the American, even in his most boastful humour. If he has nothing in a national point of view to be vain of, he has certainly much of which he can and should feel proud. There is no other country on earth which in so short a time has accomplished so much. It has but just passed the usual term allotted as the period of life to man, and yet it takes rank as a first-rate power. But let it not be supposed that all this has been achieved in

Alexander Mackay

seventy years. The American republic has never had a national infancy, like that through which most European nations have passed. The colonies were, in a measure, old whilst they were yet new. They were as old as England herself in point of moral, and new only in point of material, civilization. They were not savagès who laid the foundations of our colonial dominion in America, but emigrants from a highly civilized society, carrying with them all the moral results of centuries of social culture. The youth of Anglo-Saxon America was not a period of barbarism; its civilization, morally speaking, was up with our own when it was first colonized. If it did not always keep up with it, the reason is to be found in the nature of the circumstances in which it was placed. . . . The same conflict is now being waged in the Far West, society there at the present day being the counterpart of what society was on the sea-board colonies two centuries ago. In the colony material civilization had greatly progressed previously to 1776. When, therefore, the independence of America was proclaimed, the country had made large advances in the career of social and material improvement, so that when it became invested with a distinct and separate nationality, it was already comparatively old. The present development of America cannot, then, be regarded as the result of its efforts during the brief period of its independence. The sources of

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that development are traceable not only back to colonial times, but also to the successive stages of English civilization, long before the colonies were dreamt of. Although the American cannot thus refer all his country's greatness to the period of its independence, there is no question that the strides which it has taken during that period cast all its previous advances into the shade. In these he has undoubtedly cause for national pride and self-gratulation.

Intimately connected with the pride of country which generally distinguishes the Americans, is the feeling which they cherish towards their institutions. Indeed, when the national feeling of an American is alluded to, something very different is implied from that which is generally understood by the term. . . . The American exhibits little or none of the local attachments which distinguish the European. His feelings are more centred upon his institutions than his mere country. He looks upon himself more in the light of a republican than in that of a native of a particular territory. His affections have more to do with the social and political system with which he is connected, than with the soil which he inhabits. The national feelings which he and a European cherishes being thus different in their origin and their object, are also different in their results. The man whose attachments converge upon a particular spot of earth, is miserable if removed from it, no

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matter how greatly his circumstances otherwise may have been improved by his removal ; but give the American his institutions, and he cares but little where you place him. In some parts of the Union the local feeling may be comparatively strong, such as in New England ; but it is astonishing how readily even there an American makes up his mind to try his fortunes elsewhere, particularly if he contemplates removal merely to another part of the Union, no matter how remote, or how different in climate and other circumstances from what he has been accustomed to, provided the flag of his country waves over it, and republican institutions accompany him in his wanderings.

Strange as it may seem, this peculiarity, which makes an American think less of his country than of the institutions which characterise it, contributes greatly to the pride which he takes in his country. He is proud of it, not so much for itself as because it is the scene in which an experiment is being tried which engages the anxious attention of the world. The American feels himself much more interested in the success of his scheme of government, if not more identified with it, than the European does in regard to his. . . . He feels himself to be implicated, not only in the honour and independence of his country, but also in the success of democracy. He has asserted a great principle, and feels that, in attempting to

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prove it to be practicable, he has assumed an arduous responsibility. He feels himself, therefore, to be directly interested in the success of the political system under which he lives, and all the more so because he is conscious that in looking to its working mankind are divided into two great classes—those who are interested in its failure, and those who yearn for its success. Every American is thus, in his own estimation, the apostle of a particular political creed, in the final triumph and extension of which he finds both himself and his country deeply involved. This gives him a peculiar interest in the political scheme which he represents; and invests his country with an additional degree of importance in his sight, as in that of many others, from being the scene of an experiment in the success of which not only Americans but mankind are interested. Much, therefore, of the self-importance which the American assumes, particularly abroad, is less traceable to his mere citizenship than to his conscious identification with the success of democracy. Its manifestation may not always be agreeable to others, but the source of his pride is a legitimate and a noble one. It involves not only his own position, but also the hopes and expectations of humanity. . . .

Alexander Mackay, *The Western World* (Philadelphia, 1849), pp. 287-289 *passim*.

Charles Sumner

4. Substitutes for War (1849)

By CHARLES SUMNER

(See note above, p. 170.)

RECOGNIZING these things, men must cease to cherish War, and will renounce all appeal to its Arbitrament. They will forego rights, rather than wage an irreligious battle. But, criminal and irrational as is War, unhappily, in the present state of human error, we cannot expect large numbers to appreciate its true character, and to hate it with that perfect hatred making them renounce its agency, unless we offer an approved and practical mode of determining international controversies, as a *substitute* for the imagined necessity of the barbarous ordeal. This we are able to do; and so doing, we reflect new light upon the atrocity of a system which not only tramples upon all the precepts of the Christian faith, but defies justice and discards reason.

I. The most complete and permanent substitute would be a Congress of Nations, with a High Court of Judicature. Such a system, while admitted on all sides to promise excellent results, is opposed on two grounds. *First*, because, as regards the smaller states, it would be a tremendous engine of oppression, subversive of their political independence. Surely, it could not be so oppressive as the War System. But the experi-

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ence of the smaller States in the German Confederation and in the American Union, nay, the experience of Belgium and Holland by the side of the overtopping power of France, and the experience of Denmark and Sweden in the very night-shade of Russia, all show the futility of this objection. *Secondly*, because the decrees of such a court could not be carried into effect. Even if they were enforced by the combined power of the associate nations, the sword, as the executive arm of the high tribunal, would be only the melancholy instrument of Justice, not the Arbiter of Justice, and therefore not condemned by the conclusive reasons against international appeals to the sword. From the experience of history, and particularly from the experience of the thirty States of our Union, we learn that the occasion for any executive arm will be rare. The State of Rhode Island, in its recent controversy with Massachusetts, submitted with much indifference to the adverse decree of the Supreme Court; and I doubt not that Missouri and Iowa will submit with equal contentment to any determination of their present controversy by the same tribunal. The same submission would attend the decrees of any Court of Judicature established by the commonwealth of Nations. There is a growing sense of justice, combined with a growing might of public opinion, too little known to the soldier, that would maintain the judgments of the august

tribunal assembled in the face of the Nations, better, than the swords of all the marshals of France, better than the bloody terrors of Austerlitz or Waterloo.

The idea of a Congress of Nations with a High Court of Judicature is as practicable as its consummation is confessedly dear to the friends of Universal Peace. Whenever this Congress is convened, as surely it will be, I know not all the names that will deserve commemoration in its earliest proceedings; but there are two, whose particular and long-continued advocacy of this Institution will connect them indissolubly with its fame,—the Abbé Saint-Pierre, of France, and William Ladd, of the United States.

2. There is still another substitute for War, which is not exposed even to the shallow objections launched against a Congress of Nations. By formal treaties between two or more nations, Arbitration may be established as the mode of determining controversies between them. In every respect this is a contrast to War. It is rational, humane, and cheap. Above all, it is consistent with the teachings of Christianity. . . .

The complete overthrow of the War System, involving the disarming of the Nations. . . . Then at last our aims would be accomplished; then at last Peace would be organized among the Nations. Then might Christians repeat the fitful boast of the generous Mohawk: "We have thrown the

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hatchet so high into the air, and beyond the skies, that no arm on earth can reach to bring it down." Incalculable sums, now devoted to armaments and the destructive industry of War, would be turned to the productive industry of Art and to offices of Beneficence. As in the dead and rotten carcass of the lion which roared against the strong man of Israel, after a time, were a swarm of bees and honey, so would the enormous carcass of War, dead and rotten, be filled with crowds of useful laborers and all good works, and the riddle of Samson be once more interpreted: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

Charles Sumner, *Works* (Boston, 1875), II. 262-265 *passim*.

5. Real Virtue of Patriotism (about 1849)

By WILLIAM JAY

Son of John Jay, and political writer.

FEW virtues are more universally professed, few are more imperfectly apprehended, and few are more rarely practised, than PATRIOTISM. From the time of Absalom to the last electioneering meeting, patriotic professions have been the cheap materials from which demagogues have attempted to construct their fortunes.

William Jay

Counterfeits imply an original. There *is* such a virtue as patriotism, acknowledged and inculcated by both natural and revealed religion; and it is but a development of that benevolence which springs from moral goodness. To do good unto all men as we have opportunity, is an injunction invested with divine authority. Generally our ability to do good is confined to our families, neighbors, and countrymen; and the natural promptings of our hearts lead us to select these in preference to more distant objects, for the subjects of our kind offices. Our benevolence, when directed to our countrymen at large, constitutes PATRIOTISM; and its exercise is as much controlled by the laws of morality, as when confined to our neighbors or our families. A voice from Heaven has forbidden us, "to do evil that good may come."

The sentiment, "our country right or wrong," is as profligate and impious as would be the sentiment, "our church, or our party, right or wrong." If it be rebellion against God to violate his laws for the benefit of one individual, however dear to us, not less sinful must it be to commit a similar act for the benefit of any number of individuals. If we may not, in kindness to the highwayman, assist him in robbing and murdering the traveller, what divine law permits us to aid any number of our own countrymen in robbing and murdering other people? He who

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engages in a defensive war, with a full conviction of its necessity and justice, may be impelled by patriotism, by a benevolent desire to save the lives, and property, and rights of his countrymen. But, if he believes the war to be one of invasion and conquest, and utterly unjust, by taking part in it, he assumes its guilt, and becomes responsible for its crimes.

But soldiers, it is said, are bound to obey orders, without inquiring into their morality. Where enlistments are voluntary, this obligation is assumed, not imposed, and it may well be questioned, whether any man is at liberty to promise unqualified obedience to others. But the obligation of the soldier does not affect the duties of the citizen. The latter is free from the promises of the former. The Government has declared a war of invasion and conquest, one which the citizen believes to be most iniquitous—is he required by duty, that is, by the commands of God, voluntarily to aid the Government in prosecuting such a war, by the offer of his money and services? If he is, then all people are under a divine obligation to aid their respective Governments in all their wars, however piratical, and waged for any purpose, however detestable. Such indeed, is the sentiment advanced in the following lines:

“Stand thou by thy country’s quarrel,
Be that quarrel what it may;
He shall wear the greenest laurel,
Who shall *greatest* zeal display.”

William Jay

Here we have an American poet, who would exult in the massacre of Glencoe, sing peans to the Duke of Alva, and crown with the greenest laurels the butchers of the Albigenes.

“Our country right or wrong,” is rebellion against the moral Government of Jehovah, and treason to the cause of civil and religious liberty, of justice and humanity. . . .

It is true, a soldier perils his life; but other men do the same for money, without any reference to the good of their country. Says Washington, writing to Congress, February 9th, 1776: “Three things prompt men to a regular discharge of their duty in time of action—natural bravery, hope of reward, and fear of punishment. The two first are common to the uninstructed and the disciplined soldier; but the latter most obviously distinguishes the one from the other. A coward, when taught to believe that, if he breaks his ranks and abandons his colors, he will be punished with death by his own party, will take his chance against the enemy.” Washington was too well acquainted with human nature, and too much devoted to truth, to attribute martial valor to patriotism. . . .

History and daily observation compel the conviction, that patriotism is more frequently professed than practised, and that much which assumes the name, and passes current with the world, is utterly spurious. Yet it is also true, that

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the patriotism which seeks the public good, in obedience to the Divine will, and in accordance with the precepts of the Gospel, far from being an imaginary, is a real and active virtue. It is, indeed, to be found in camps and senates, but these are not its exclusive nor its favorite haunts. This patriotism inspires many a prayer for the peace, virtue, and happiness of the nation, and prompts innumerable efforts and costly sacrifices of time and money for the temporal and spiritual welfare of our fellow-countrymen. Were we permitted to trace effects to their causes, in the moral government of the world, we should doubtless find that much of our prosperity as a people flows from the labors of faithful pastors, self-denying Sunday-school teachers, and sincere, zealous, but humble Christian men and women. It is chiefly by such patriotism, gentle and noiseless as the dew of Heaven, that our land is clothed with moral verdure and beauty, and that those who sit under their own vine, with none to make them afraid, are indebted for the peace and security they enjoy.

Patriotism springing from obedience to God, guided by His laws, and exercised in official station for the national welfare, at the certain and willing loss of popular favor and personal advantage, is perhaps the highest perfection to which this virtue can attain.

William Jay, *The Mexican War* (Boston, 1849), 279-289 *passim*.

6. Slavery and Union (1850)

By GOVERNOR JOHN A. QUITMAN

A German immigrant, who became governor of Mississippi. One of the hottest fire eaters of the period.

CONNECTED with our federal relations is another subject of deep and vital interest to us, in common with a large portion of our sister states of the Union, a question which, in the last few years, has assumed a momentous and startling aspect.

One half of the sovereign states of this glorious confederacy, in the exercise of the undoubted right of self-government, have chosen to retain, as a part of their elementary social system, the institution of the domestic slavery of an inferior race. This institution is entwined in our political system, and can not be separated from it without destruction to our social fabric. It has existed here since the cavaliers of Jamestown and the Puritans of Plymouth Rock first built their pilgrim fires upon the shores of America. It was recognized in the formation of the federal Constitution, and to its existence among us, as much as to any other single cause, is attributable the rapid advance of our country in its career of prosperity, greatness, and wealth.

That Supreme Being, whose all-seeing eye looks down upon the nations of the earth, has

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beheld and tolerated its existence among us for more than two centuries, and has poured out upon us the choicest blessings of his providence. We do not regard it as an evil; on the contrary, we think that our prosperity, our happiness, our very political existence, is inseparably connected with it. We have a right to it above and under the Constitution of the United States. We can not give up that right. We *will* not yield it. We have a right to the quiet enjoyment of our slave property. We can not and will no longer permit that right to be disturbed. It is of those essential rights which can not be yielded up without dishonor and self-degradation. None who believe that we have inherited the free spirit of our fathers can doubt our determination, at all hazards, to maintain these positions so essential to our security.

The statesmen in the non-slaveholding states who attempt to trample upon our rights, either mistake the intelligence and spirit of the southern people, or knowingly hazard the integrity of the Union. They should know that the South is now aroused to the magnitude of the danger. We are no longer permitted to doubt that a systematic and deliberate crusade against our sacred rights is now in progress, and has assumed a character which requires us to act.

Distinguished northern statesmen have not only avowed their determination to exclude the

John A. Quitman

slave interest from the protection of the Constitution, but to use all the powers which, by a broad construction of that instrument, they can assume to effect its ultimate extermination.

Some of the non-slaveholding states have, by resolutions of their Legislatures, re-echoed these pernicious doctrines, and many of them, in palpable violation of their constitutional compact, have enacted laws effectually to prevent the reclamation of fugitive slaves.

These insulting and offensive measures have not been confined to individuals or to the state governments. The halls of Congress, where northern and southern men should meet as brethren, have become the theatre of this war upon slavery. Already has the attempt been made, as is threatened to be renewed, I fear with prospects of ultimate success, to exclude the slaveholding states from an equal participation in the common territory of the states—to confine the slaveholder and the slave for all time to come to the states in which the institution now exists—to abolish negro slavery in the federal district, and to suppress the internal slave-trade between the states.

These measures, not only threatened, but actually introduced in Congress, too plainly speak the deliberate intention of their instigators to wage a war of extermination against our most valued rights. Whether they originate in fanaticism, affected philanthropy, or calculations of

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political power, they can have no other object than the ultimate destruction of our domestic institutions, or the dissolution of the Union. The advocates of these destructive measures seek to perpetrate wrongs to which the people of Mississippi, of all parties, recently assembled in convention, have solemnly declared that they can not and will not submit. They cherish the Union constituted by the wisdom of our fathers; they will defend the Constitution, which established and alone maintains that Union, but they have no love or veneration for any other union than that which is written and defined in the Constitution. They are not to be deceived and robbed of their constitutional rights by men who, uttering hollow professions of attachment to the Union, are deliberately severing the ties that bind us together. Should this glorious Union perish, let the indignant patriot heap curses upon the traitors who, by destroying the compromises of the Constitution, sapped the foundations of

“The realm,
The last and the noblest of time.”

I may have dwelt too long upon this subject, but I regard it as the great, the absorbing question of the day; one which must now be met deliberately, calmly, and boldly. The South has long submitted to grievous wrongs. Dishonor, degradation, and ruin await her if she submits

John C. Calhoun

farther. The people of Mississippi have taken their stand, and, I doubt not, their representatives will maintain it, by providing means to meet every probable contingency. I here pledge myself firmly to execute their will to the extent of my constitutional powers. . . .

Claiborne, *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman* (N. Y., 1860), II. 22-24 *passim*.

7. How Can the Union Be Saved? (1850)

By SENATOR JOHN C. CALHOUN

From Calhoun's dying speech. His last effort to save the Union by making a complicated and divided government.

HAVING now shown what cannot save the Union, I return to the question with which I commenced, How can the Union be saved? There is but one way by which it can with any certainty; and that is, by a full and final settlement, on the principle of justice, of all the questions of issue between the two sections. The South asks for justice, simple justice, and less she ought not to take. She has no compromise to offer, but the Constitution; and no concession or surrender to make. She has already surrendered so much that she has little left to surrender. Such a settlement would go to the

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root of the evil, and remove all cause of discontent, by satisfying the South that she could remain honorably and safely in the Union, and thereby restore the harmony and fraternal feelings between the sections, which existed anterior to the Missouri agitation. Nothing else can with any certainty, finally and forever settle the question at issue, terminate agitation, and save the Union.

But can this be done? Yes, easily; not by the weaker party, for it can, of itself do nothing,—not even protect itself—but by the stronger. The North has only to will it to accomplish it—to do justice by conceding to the South an equal right in the acquired territory, and to do her duty by causing the stipulations relative to fugitive slaves to be faithfully fulfilled, to cease the agitation of the slave question, and to provide for the insertion of a provision in the Constitution, by an amendment, which will restore to the South, in substance, the power it possessed of protecting herself, before the equilibrium between the sections was destroyed by the action of this Government. There will be no difficulty in devising such a provision—one that will protect the South, and which, at the same time, will improve and strengthen the Government, instead of impairing and weakening it.

But will the North agree to this? It is for her to answer the question. But, I will say,

she cannot refuse, if she has half the love for the Union which she professes to have, or without justly exposing herself to the charge that her love of power and aggrandizement is far greater than her love of the Union. At all events the responsibility of saving the Union rests on the North, and not on the South. The South cannot save it by any act of hers, and the North may save it without any sacrifice whatever, unless to do justice, and to perform her duties under the Constitution, should be regarded by her as a sacrifice.

It is time, Senators, that there should be an open and manly avowal on all sides, as to what is intended to be done. If the question is not now settled, it is uncertain whether it ever can be; and we, as the representatives of the States of this Union, regarded as governments, should come to a distinct understanding as to our respective views, in order to ascertain whether the great questions at issue can be settled or not. If you, who represent the stronger portion, cannot agree to settle on the broad principle of justice and duty, say so; and let the States we both represent agree to separate and part in peace. If you are unwilling we should part in peace, tell us so, and we shall know what to do, when you reduce the question to submission or resistance. If you remain silent, you will compel us to infer by your acts

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what you intend. In that case, California will become the test question. If you admit her, under all the difficulties that oppose her admission, you compel us to infer that you intend to exclude us from the whole of the acquired territories, with the intention of destroying, irretrievably, the equilibrium between the two sections. We would be blind not to perceive in that case, that your real objects are power and aggrandizement, and infatuated, not to act accordingly.

I have now, Senators, done my duty in expressing my opinions fully, freely and candidly, on this solemn occasion. In doing so I have been governed by the motives which have governed me in all the stages of the agitation of the slavery question since its commencement. I have exerted myself, during the whole period, to arrest it, with the intention of saving the Union, if it could be done; and if it could not, to save the section where it has pleased Providence to cast my lot, and which I sincerely believe has justice and the Constitution on its side. Having faithfully done my duty to the best of my ability, both to the Union and my section, throughout this agitation, I shall have the consolation, let what will come, that I am free from all responsibility.

Henry Clay

8. No Disunion Without War (1850)

By SENATOR HENRY CLAY

Part of Clay's discussion of his compromise measure which was eventually passed and probably delayed the Civil War.

MR. CLAY: It is totally unnecessary for the gentleman to remind me of my coming from a slaveholding State. I know whence I come, and I know my duty, and I am ready to submit to any responsibility which belongs to me as a Senator from a slaveholding State.

Sir, I have heard something said on this and on a former occasion about allegiance to the South. I know no South, no North, no East, no West, to which I owe any allegiance. I owe allegiance to two sovereignties, and only two; one is to the sovereignty of this Union, and the other is to the sovereignty of the State of Kentucky. My allegiance is to this Union and to my State; but if gentlemen suppose they can exact from me an acknowledgment of allegiance to any ideal or future contemplated confederacy of the South, I here declare that I owe no allegiance to it; nor will I, for one, come under any such allegiance if I can avoid it. I know what my duties are, and gentlemen may cease to remind me of the fact that I come from a slaveholding State. . . .

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But, I must take the occasion to say that, in my opinion, there is no right on the part of one or more of the states to secede from the Union. War and the dissolution of the Union are identical and inseparable. There can be no dissolution of the Union, except by consent or by war. No one can expect, in the existing state of things, that that consent would be given, and war is the only alternative by which a dissolution could be accomplished. And, Mr. President, if consent were given—if possible we were to separate by mutual agreement and by a given line, in less than sixty days after such an agreement had been executed, war would break out between the free and slaveholding portions of this Union—between the two independent portions into which it would be erected in virtue of the act of separation. . . .

But, how are you going to separate them? In my humble opinion, Mr. President, we should begin at least with three Confederacies—the Confederacy of the North, the Confederacy of the Atlantic southern States, (the slaveholding states,) and the Confederacy of the Valley of the Mississippi. My life upon it, sir, that vast population that has already concentrated, and will concentrate, upon the head-waters and tributaries of the Mississippi, will never consent that the mouth of that river shall be held subject to the power of any foreign State whatever. Such I believe

Henry Clay

would be the consequences of a dissolution of the Union. But other Confederacies would spring up, from time to time, as dissatisfaction and discontent were disseminated over the country. There would be the Confederacy of the Lakes—perhaps the Confederacy of New England, and of the middle States. . . .

Mr. President, I am directly opposed to any purpose of secession, of separation. I am for staying within the Union, and defying any portion of this Union to expel or drive me out of the Union. I am for staying within the Union, and fighting for my rights—if necessary, with the sword—within the bounds and under the safeguard of the Union. I am for vindicating these rights; but not by being driven out of the Union rashly and unceremoniously by any portion of this Confederacy. Here I am within it, and here I mean to stand and die; as far as my individual purposes or wishes can go—within it to protect myself, and to defy all power upon earth to expel me or drive me from the situation in which I am placed. Will there not be more safety in fighting within the Union than without it?

Suppose your rights to be violated; suppose wrongs to be done you, aggressions to be perpetrated upon you, cannot you better fight and vindicate them, if you have occasion to resort to that last necessity of the sword, within the Union, and

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with the sympathies of a large portion of the population of the Union of these States differently constituted from you, than you can fight and vindicate your rights, expelled from the Union, and driven from it without ceremony and without authority?

I said that I thought that there was no right on the part of one or more of the States to secede from this Union. I think that the Constitution of the thirteen States was made, not merely for the generation which then existed, but for posterity, undefined, unlimited, permanent and perpetual—for their posterity, and for every subsequent State which might come into the Union, binding themselves by that indissoluble bond. It is to remain for that posterity now and forever. Like another of the great relations of private life, it was a marriage that no human authority can dissolve or divorce the parties from; and, if I may be allowed to refer to this same example in private life, let us say what man and wife say to each other: We have mutual faults; nothing in the form of human beings can be perfect; let us, then, be kind to each other, forbearing, conceding; let us live in happiness and peace. . . .

Look at history—consult the pages of all history, ancient or modern: look at human nature—look at the character of the contest in which you would be engaged in the supposition of a war following the dissolution of the Union, such as I

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have suggested—and I ask you if it is possible for you to doubt that the final but perhaps distant termination of the whole will be some despot treading down the liberties of the people?—that the final result will be the extinction of this last and glorious light which is leading all mankind, who are gazing upon it, to cherish hope and anxious expectation that the liberty which prevails here will sooner or later be advanced throughout the civilized world? Can you, Mr. President, lightly contemplate the consequences? Can you yield yourself to a torrent of passion, amidst dangers which I have depicted in colors far short of what would be the reality, if the event should ever happen? I conjure gentlemen—whether from the South or the North, by all they hold dear in this world—by all their love of liberty—by all their veneration for their ancestors—by all their regard for posterity—by all their gratitude to Him who has bestowed upon them such unnumbered blessings—by all the duties which they owe to mankind, and all the duties they owe to themselves—by all these considerations I implore them to pause—solemnly to pause—at the edge of the precipice, before the fearful and disastrous leap is taken in the yawning abyss below, which will inevitably lead to certain and irretrievable destruction.

And, finally, Mr. President, I implore, as the best blessing which Heaven can bestow upon me

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upon earth, that if the direful and sad event of the dissolution of the Union shall happen, I may not survive to behold the sad and heart-rending spectacle. . . .

Congressional Globe, Appendix, 31st Cong. 1 sess.
(Washington, 1850), 127-128 *passim*.

9. Reenacting the Will of God (1850)

By SENATOR DANIEL WEBSTER

Part of the Seventh of March speech in favor of the compromise.

I NOW say, sir, as the proposition upon which I stand this day, and upon the truth and firmness of which I intend to act until it is overthrown, that there is not, at this moment, within the United States, or any territory of the United States, a single foot of land, the character of which, in regard to its being free-soil territory or slave territory, is not fixed by some law, and some irrevocable law, beyond the power of the action of this Government. . . .

Now, as to California and New Mexico, I hold slavery to be excluded from those territories by a law even superior to that which admits and sanctions it in Texas—I mean the law of nature—of physical geography—the law of the formation,

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of the earth. That law settles forever, with a strength beyond all terms of human enactment, that slavery cannot exist in California or New Mexico. . . . I look upon it, therefore, as a fixed fact, to use an expression current at this day, that both California and New Mexico are destined to be free, so far as they are settled at all, which I believe, especially in regard to New Mexico, will be very little for a great length of time—free by the arrangement of things by the Power above us. I have therefore to say, in this respect also, that this country is fixed for freedom, to as many persons as shall ever live there, by as irrepealable and a more irrepealable law, than the law that attaches to the right of holding slaves in Texas; and I will say further, that if a resolution, or a law, were now before us, to provide a territorial government for New Mexico, I would not vote to put any prohibition into it whatever. The use of such a prohibition would be idle, as it respects any effect it would have upon the territory; and I would not take pains to reaffirm an ordinance of nature, nor to reenact the will of God. And I would put in no Wilmot proviso, for the purpose of a taunt or a reproach. I would put into it no evidence of the votes of superior power, to wound the pride, even whether a just pride, a rational pride, or an irrational pride—to wound the pride of the gentlemen who belong to the southern States. . . .

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Mr. President, in the excited times in which we live, there is found to exist a state of crimination and recrimination between the North and the South. . . . I will state these complaints, especially one complaint of the South, which has in my opinion just foundation; and that is, that there has been found at the North, among individuals and among the Legislatures of the North, a disinclination to perform, fully, their constitutional duties, in regard to the return of persons bound to service, who have escaped into the free States. In that respect, it is my judgment that the South is right, and the North is wrong. Every member of every northern Legislature is bound, by oath, like every other officer in the country, to support the Constitution of the United States; and this article of the Constitution, which says to these States, they shall deliver up fugitives from service, is as binding in honor and conscience as any other article. . . . I put it to all the sober and sound minds at the North, as a question of morals and a question of conscience, What right have they, in all their legislative capacity, or any other, to endeavor to get round this Constitution to embarrass the free exercise of the rights secured by the Constitution, to the persons whose slaves escape from them? None at all—none at all. Neither in the forum of conscience, nor before the face of the Constitution, are they justified, in my opinion. Of

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course, it is a matter for their consideration. They probably, in the turmoil of the times, have not stopped to consider of this; they have followed what seemed to be the current of thought and of motives as the occasion arose, and neglected to investigate fully the real question, and to consider their constitutional obligations, as I am sure, if they did consider, they would fulfill them with alacrity. . . .

Then, sir, there are those abolition societies, of which I am unwilling to speak, but in regard to which I have very clear notions and opinions. I do not think them useful. I think their operations for the last twenty years have produced nothing good or valuable. At the same time, I know thousands of them are honest and good men; perfectly well-meaning men. They have excited feelings; they think they must do something for the cause of liberty; and in their sphere of action, they do not see what else they can do, than to contribute to an abolition press, or an abolition society, or to play an abolition lecturer. I do not mean to impute gross motives even to the leaders of these societies, but I am not blind to the consequences. I cannot but see what mischiefs their interference with the South has produced. . . . The bonds of the slaves were bound more firmly than before; their rivets were more strongly fastened. Public opinion, which in Virginia had begun to be exhibited against slavery,

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and was opening out for the discussion of the question, drew back and shut itself up in its castle. . . . We all know the fact, and we all know the cause, and everything that this agitating people have done, has been, not to enlarge, but to restrain, not to set free, but to bind faster, the slave population of the South. . . .

Now, sir, so far as any of these grievances have their foundation in matters of law, they can be redressed, and ought to be redressed; and so far as they have foundation in matters of opinion, in sentiment, in mutual crimination and re-crimination, all that we can do is, to endeavor to allay the agitation, and cultivate a better feeling and more fraternal sentiments between the South and the North.

Mr. President, I should much prefer to have heard, from every member on this floor, declarations of opinion that this Union should never be dissolved, than the declaration of opinion that in any case, under the pressure of any circumstances, such a dissolution was possible. I hear with pain, and anguish, and distress, the word secession, especially when it falls from the lips of those who are eminently patriotic, and known to the country, and known all over the world, for their political services. Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. The dismemberment of this vast country with-

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out convulsion! The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep without ruffling the surface! Who is so foolish—I beg everybody's pardon—as to expect to see any such thing? Sir, he who sees these States, now revolving in harmony around a common centre, and expects to see them quit their places and fly off without convulsion, may look the next hour to see the heavenly bodies rush from their spheres, and jostle against each other in the realms of space, without producing the crush of the universe. There can be no such thing as a peaceable secession. Peaceable secession is an utter impossibility. Is the great Constitution under which we live here—covering this whole country—is it to be thawed and melted away by secession, as the snows on the mountain melt under the influence of a vernal sun—disappear almost unobserved, and die off? No, sir! no, sir! I will not state what might produce the disruption of the States; but, sir, I see it as plainly as I see the sun in heaven—I see that disruption must produce such a war as I will not describe, in its twofold characters.

Appendix to the Congressional Globe, 31st Cong., 1st sess (John C Rives, Washington, 1850), 272-276 *passim*, March 7, 1850.

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10. "The Higher Law Than the Constitution" (1850)

By SENATOR WILLIAM H. SEWARD

The expression "the higher law" gave great offense to Jefferson Davis and other Southern friends of Seward.

THERE is another aspect of the principle of compromise which deserves consideration. It assumes that slavery, if not the only institution in a slave state, is at least a ruling institution, and that this characteristic is recognized by the Constitution. But *slavery* is only *one* of many institutions there. Freedom is equally an institution there. Slavery is only a temporary, accidental, partial, and incongruous one. Freedom, on the contrary, is a perpetual, organic, universal one, in harmony with the Constitution of the United States. The slaveholder himself stands under the protection of the latter, in common with all the free citizens of the state. But it is, moreover, an indispensable institution. You may separate slavery from South Carolina, and the state will still remain; but if you subvert freedom there, the state will cease to exist. But the principle of this compromise gives complete ascendancy in the slave states, and in the Constitution of the United States, to the subordinate, accidental, and incongruous institution, over its para-

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mount antagonist. To reduce this claim of slavery to an absurdity, it is only necessary to add that there are only two states in which slaves are a majority, and not one in which the slaveholders are not a very disproportionate minority.

But there is yet another aspect in which this principle must be examined. It regards the domain only as a possession, to be enjoyed either in common or by partition by the citizens of the old states. It is true, indeed, that the national domain is ours. It is true it was acquired by the valor and with the wealth of the whole nation. But we hold, nevertheless, no arbitrary power over it. We hold no arbitrary authority over anything, whether acquired lawfully or seized by usurpation. The Constitution regulates our stewardship; the Constitution devotes the domain to union, to justice, to defence, to welfare, and to liberty.

But there is a higher law than the Constitution, which regulates our authority over the domain, and devotes it to the same noble purposes. The territory is a part, no inconsiderable part, of the common heritage of mankind, bestowed upon them by the Creator of the universe. We are his stewards, and must so discharge our trust as to secure in the highest attainable degree their happiness. How momentous that trust is, we may learn from the instructions of the founder of modern philosophy:

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"No man," says Bacon, "can by care-taking, as the Scripture saith, add a cubit to his stature in this little model of a man's body; but, in the great frame of kingdoms and commonwealths, it is in the power of princes or estates to add amplitude and greatness to their kingdoms. For, by introducing such ordinances, constitutions, and customs, as are wise, they may sow greatness to their posterity and successors. But these things are commonly not observed, but left to take their chance."

This is a state, and we are deliberating for it, just as our fathers deliberated in establishing the institutions we enjoy. Whatever superiority there is in our condition and hopes over those of any other "kingdom" or "estate," is due to the fortunate circumstance that our ancestors did not leave things to "take their chance," but that they "added amplitude and greatness" to our commonwealth "by introducing such ordinances, constitutions, and customs, as were wise." We in our turn have succeeded to the same responsibilities, and we cannot approach the duty before us wisely or justly, except we raise ourselves to the great consideration of how we can most certainly "sow greatness to our posterity and successors."

And now the simple, bold, and even awful, question which presents itself to us is this: Shall we, who are founding institutions, social and political, for countless millions; shall we, who know by experience the wise and the just, and are free to choose them, and to reject the erroneous and unjust; shall we establish human bondage, or permit it by our sufferance to be established? Sir,

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our forefathers would not have hesitated an hour. They found slavery existing here, and they left it only because they could not remove it. There is not only no free state which would now establish it, but there is no slave state, which, if it had had the free alternative as we now have, would have founded slavery. Indeed, our revolutionary predecessors had precisely the same question before them in establishing an organic law under which the states of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin, have since come into the Union, and they solemnly repudiated and excluded slavery from those states forever. I confess that the most alarming evidence of our degeneracy which has yet been given is found in the fact that we even debate such a question. . . .

The senator proposes to expel me. I am ready to meet that trial too; and if I shall be expelled, I shall not be the first man subjected to punishment for maintaining that there is a power higher than human law, and that power delights in justice; that rulers, whether despots or elected rulers of a free people, are bound to administer justice for the benefit of society. . . .

William H. Seward, *Works* (N. Y., 1853), I. 74-129 *passim*.

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II. Self-Government in Dependencies (1850)

By WILLIAM H. SEWARD

(See note above, p. 116.)

BUT we are told that the people of New Mexico are unfit for self-government. Sir, this objection comes too late. No one, maintaining the capacity of man for self-government, and admitting the validity of the treaty, can assert that any one hundred thousand people, citizens of the United States, recognized as such by its constitution and laws, are incapable of the functions of self-government. I know it is said that you will govern them better than they can govern themselves. What is the guaranty you are offering, for governing them better than they can govern themselves? It is contained in this bill, to dismember their territory and subvert their constitution, which secures equal and impartial freedom. They can assuredly do better for themselves than that.

—They are a mingled population—marked by characteristics which resulted from the extraordinary system of colonization and government maintained by Old Spain in her provinces—a policy entirely different from our own. The colonization of Spanish America proceeded altogether

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from an insatiable thirst for gold, and for nothing else. The government of Spain over her colonies was an arbitrary despotism, conducted on the principle of deriving the utmost profit and advantage from her colonies. . . .

My motion is to bring these peculiar people into the United States, as a state of this Union; and under the circumstances which have occurred, it is a motion upon which I shall stand, whoever may oppose it, and in whatever way, as long as grace and strength are given me to stand up for anything. But if the question were now to arise, for the first time, whether such a people should be invited to share in the government of this Union, I should answer NO. If the question were whether the public treasury should pour forth money to buy the consent of such a people to come into the Union, I should say NO. Still more, if the proposition were to conquer such a people to bring them into the Union, I should resist it to the last. But these questions have all gone by. You have conquered these people. You have covenanted to bring them into the Union; and to bring them into the Union, not as a territory, not as a province, but as a state. And you can no longer protect or defend them in the rights they enjoy, unless you fulfil that treaty immediately and to the letter. They are, by the testimony of all historians and of all travellers, an inoffensive, harmless, timorous, and docile peo-

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ple. They must have protection and government. You owe them both. It is now painfully apparent that you can secure them neither in any other way than by allowing them the constitution of a state, and that immediately, too. This bill betrays on its face—this whole debate—this entire proceeding, betrays the truth of the proposition. . . .

William H. Seward, *Works* (N. Y., 1853), I. 123-125 *passim*.

12. No Danger from Public Discussion (1850)

By REPRESENTATIVE JOSHUA R. GIDDINGS

A strong protest against the theory that the rightfulness of slavery must not be publicly discussed or questioned.

SIR, certain Senators in the other end of the capitol, have for months been endeavoring to convince the people of the necessity of passing the "omnibus bill," as it is called. No arguments could be raised in favor of that measure, for it was not founded on reason. One consideration alone was pressed upon the public mind. The cry was raised that "*the Union was in danger!*" The newspapers here responded, "*the Union is in danger!*" The country press repeated the alarm. The cry was caught up and echoed by every timid,

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faltering poltroon of the North. Petitions to "*save the Union*" were circulated, Public meetings were held in our commercial cities where Texas scrip was mostly influential, and resolutions were adopted "*to save the Union.*" Fourth of July orations were delivered, and theological pamphlets were published, and morning prayers were put up in this hall to "*save the Union.*" The supplications were not that we "*may legislate in righteousness,*" deal out justice and mercy to those who are oppressed and degraded by our laws. These were regarded as objects of trifling importance, when compared with the pending danger that *Texas would dissolve the Union.* Indeed, they are never mentioned by our chaplain.

Sir, I am nauseated, sickened at this moral and political effeminacy; this downright cowardice. It is unworthy of American statesmen. Our constituents sent us here to maintain and defend their rights; not to surrender them; not to make ourselves and our people tributary to Texas. In electing us, they had no expectation that we would turn upon them and violently thrust our hands into their pockets and take therefrom ten millions of dollars, and hand it over to the slave-holders of Texas, for territory which belongs to us, and to which Texas never had any title whatever.

Sir, gentlemen here may say what they please; the people have no fears of a dissolution of the Union. They understand this kind of gasconade.

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The cry of "dissolution" has been the dernier resort of southern men for fifty years, whenever they desired to frighten doughfaces into a compliance with their measures. It may alarm gentlemen here; but I do not think you can find in northern Ohio an equal number of nervous old women or of love-sick girls, who could be moved by it.

Again, it is said that we must stop this agitation in relation to slavery! The people see us here passing laws to enslave our fellow men; to sell women in open market; to create a traffic in the bodies of children. They know this to be opposed to the self-evident truth that "all men are created equal," "that governments are constituted to sustain that equality of rights;" and they converse on the subject, examine the reasons on which such traffic is based, and vote for men who will oppose such barbarous practices. This is called *agitation*: and gentlemen here talk of suppressing it by passing such laws as that on your table. This is the manner in which we are to stop the progress of truth; to seal the lips of philanthropists; and to silence the voice of humanity. Yes, Sir; it is gravely proposed that we should set bounds to the human intellect, and to limit political investigations by statute laws.

Sir, the great founder of our holy religion, when he proclaimed the Heaven-born truths of his Gospel, was denounced as an "*agitator*." He

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was arrested, condemned, and executed for asserting truths which the Scribes and Pharisees were too stupid to comprehend. It was done to stop *agitation*; but truth, emanating from "the Holy One," has extended, spread, and progressed, and will "go on conquering and to conquer," in spite of all the political Scribes and Pharisees in Congress, and the quaking and trembling of doughfaces here and elsewhere.

This progress in morals and in political intelligence, is in strict accordance with the law of our being, and cannot be prevented. The idea of setting bounds to the human intellect, of circumscribing it by statute law, is preposterous. Why not limit the arts and sciences by conservative legislation, as well as moral and political progress? Why not follow the example of those who attempted to stop the agitation of Galileo, when he proclaimed the truth of our solar system, and the laws by which the planets are retained in their orbits? He caused great agitation, and was excommunicated for his *infidelity*, in thus daring to proclaim truths which the *conservatives* of that age were too ignorant to comprehend. It required two hundred and fifty years for the stupid clergy of that day, to understand the truths for which he had been expelled from their Christian fellowship. How long it will require certain theological professors of the present day, to comprehend the "self-evident truths" of man's equal-

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ity, is not yet determined. Or how long it will require our political doctors to comprehend the very obvious fact that an educated and reflecting people *will think and act for themselves*, is yet to be ascertained.

But, if we are to have conservative legislation, let us tear down the telegraphic wires, break up our galvanic batteries, and imprison Morse, and stop all agitation upon the subject of your "magnetic railroads of thought." Lay up your steamboats, place fetters upon your locomotives, convert your railroads into cultivated fields, and erase the name of Fulton from our history. Go down to yonder Institute; drive Page from his laboratory, break in pieces his galvanic engines, and unchain the imprisoned lightning which is there pent up; then pass an act of Congress prohibiting all further agitation on these subjects, and thus carry out your conservative principles, of which some men are continually boasting. . . .

Joshua R. Giddings, *Speeches in Congress* (Boston, 1853), 409-411.

13. Not Possible to Suppress
Freedom (1850)

By REVEREND THEODORE PARKER

A noted New England minister with remarkable power of terse and patriotic statements.

It is not for men long to hinder the march of human freedom. I have no fear for that, ultimately,—none at all, simply for this reason, that I believe in the Infinite God. You may make your statutes; an appeal always lies to the higher law, and decisions adverse to that get set aside in the ages. Your statutes cannot hold him. You may gather all the dried grass and all the straw in both continents; you may braid it into ropes to bind down the sea; while it is calm you may laugh, and say, "Lo, I have chained the ocean!" and howl down the law of him who holds the universe as a rosebud in his hand—its every ocean but a drop of dew. "How the waters suppress their agitation," you may say. But when the winds blow their trumpets, the sea rises in its strength, snaps asunder the bonds that had confined his mighty limbs, and the world is littered with the idle hay! Stop the human race in its development and march to freedom? As well might the boys of Boston, some lustrous night, mounting the steeples of this town, call on the stars to stay their course! Gently, but irre-

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sistibly, the Greater and the Lesser Bear move round the pole; Orion, in his mighty mail, comes up the sky; the Bull, the Ram, the Heavenly Twins, the Crab, the Lion, the Maid, the Scales, and all that shining company, pursue their march all night, and the new day discovers the idle urchins in their lofty places, all tired, and sleepy, and ashamed.

It is not possible to suppress the idea of freedom, or forever hold down its institutions. But it is possible to destroy a State; a political party with geographical bounds may easily be rent asunder. It is not impossible to shiver this American Union. But how? What clove asunder the great British party, one nation once in America and England? Did not our fathers love their fatherland? Aye. They called it home, and were loyal with abundant fealty; there was no lack of piety for home. It was the attempt to make old English injustice New England law! Who did it,—the British people? Never. Their hand did no such sacrilege. It was the merchants of London, with the "Navigation Act"; the politicians of Westminster with the "Stamp Act"; the tories of America, who did not die without issue, that for office and its gold would keep a king's unjust commands. It was they who drove our fathers into disunion against their will. Is here no lesson? We love law; all of us love it; but a true man loves it only as

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the Safeguard of the Rights of Man. If it destroy these rights, he spurns it with his feet. Is here no lesson?

"God save the Commonwealth!" proclaims the Governor. God will do his part,—doubt not of that. But you and I must help him save the State. What can we do? Next Sunday I will ask you for your charity; to-day I ask a greater gift, more than the abundance of the rich, or the poor widow's long-remembered mite. I ask you for your justice. Give that to your native land. Do you not love your country? I know you do. Here are our homes and the graves of our fathers; the bones of our mothers are under the sod. The memory of past deeds is fresh with us; many a farmer's and mechanic's son inherits from his sires some cup of manna gathered in the wilderness, and kept in memory of our exodus; some stones from the Jordan, which our fathers passed over sorely bestead and hunted after; some Aaron's rod, green and blossoming with fragrant memories of the day of small things when the Lord led us—and all these attach us to our land, our native land. We love the great ideas of the North, the institutions which they founded, the righteous laws, the schools, the churches too—do we not love all these? Aye. I know well you do. Then by all these, and more than all, by the dear love of God, let us swear that we will keep the

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justice of the Eternal Law. Then are we all safe. We know not what a day may bring forth, but we know that Eternity will bring everlasting peace. High in the heavens, the pole-star of the world, shines Justice; placed within us, as our guide thereto, is Conscience. Let us be faithful to that

“Which, though it trembles as it lowly lies,
Points to the light that changes not in heaven.”

Stedman and Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature* (N. Y., 1888), VI. 517-520 *passim*.

14. A German's Defense of the Union (1851)

By FRANCIS LIEBER

(See note above, p. 46.) The foreign immigrants mostly went with the sections in which they lived but were far more numerous in the North.

THERE are those who pretend to make light of the Union; there are those who wilfully shut their eyes to the many positive blessings she has bestowed upon us, and who seem to forget that the good which the Union, with her Supreme Court or any other vast and lasting institution, bestows upon men, consists as much in preventing evils as in showering benefits into our laps. There are those who will not see or hear what is happening before our own eyes in other coun-

tries—in Germany, for instance—that living, yet bleeding, ailing, writhing, humbled commentator on Disunion. Ah! fellow-citizens, you can but fear, and justly fear, *that* of disunion which I *know*. With you, the evils of disunion are happily but matter of apprehension; with me, unhappily, matter of living knowledge. I am like a man who knows the plague, because he has been in the East, where he witnessed its ravages; you only know it from description—and easily may it be understood why I shudder when I hear persons speak of the plague with trifling flippancy, or courting the appalling distemper to come and make its pleasant home among us, as a sweet blessing which Providence has never yet vouchsafed to us. . . .

What is right for one state must needs be right for all the others. As to South Carolina, we can just barely imagine the possibility of her secession, owing to her situation near the border of the sea. But what would she have said a few years ago, or what indeed would she say now—I speak of South Carolina, less the secessionists—if a state of the interior, say Ohio, were to vindicate the presumed right of secession, and to declare that, being tired of a republican government, she prefers to establish a monarchy with some prince, imported, all dressed and legitimate, from that country where princes grow in abundance, and whence Greece, Belgium, and

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Portugal have been furnished with ready-made royalties—what would we say? We would simply say, this cannot be and must not be. In forming the Union we have each given up some attributes, to receive, in turn, advantages of the last importance; and we have in consequence so shaped and balanced all our systems that no member can withdraw without deranging and embarrassing all, and ultimately destroying the whole. . . .

And can we imagine that men so sagacious, so far-seeing, on the one hand, and so thoroughly schooled by experience on the other, as the framers of our Constitution were, have just omitted, by some oversight, to speak on so important a point? One of the greatest jurists of Germany said to me at Frankfort, when the Constituent Parliament was there assembled, of which he was a member: "The more I study your Constitution, the more I am amazed at the wise forecast of its makers and the manly forbearance which prevented them from entering into any unnecessary details, so easily embarrassing at a later period." They would not deserve this praise, or, in fact, our respect, had they been guilty of a neglect such as has been supposed. Can we, in our sober senses, imagine that they believed in the right of secession when they did not even stipulate a fixed time necessary to give notice of a contemplated secession,—

Francis Lieber

knowing, as they did, quite as well as we do, that not even a common treaty of defence or offence—no, not even one of trade and amity—is ever entered into by independent powers, without stipulating the period which must elapse between informing the other parties of an intended withdrawal and the time when it actually can take place; and when they knew perfectly well that, unless such a provision is contained in treaties, all international law interprets them as perpetual,—when they knew that not even two merchants join in partnership without providing for the period necessary to give notice of an intended dissolution of the house? It seems to me preposterous to suppose it. The absence of all mention of secession must be explained on the same ground on which the omission of parricide in the first Roman penal laws was explained—no one thought of such a deed. . . .

I will only add that I, for one, dare not do anything toward the disruption of the Union. Situated, as we are, between Europe and Asia, on a fresh continent, I see the finger of God in it. I believe our destiny to be a high, a great, and a solemn one, before which the discussions now agitating us shrink into much smaller dimensions than they appear if we pay exclusive attention to them. I have come to this country, and pledged a voluntary oath to be faithful to it, and I will keep this oath. This is my country from

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the choice of manhood, and not by the chance of birth. In my position, as a servant of the state, in a public institution of education, I have imposed upon myself the duty of using my influence with the young neither one way nor the other in this discussion. I have scrupulously and conscientiously adhered to it in all my teaching and intercourse. There is not a man or a youth that can gainsay this. But I am a man and a citizen, and as such I have a right, or the duty, as the case may be, to speak my mind and my inmost convictions on solemn occasions before my fellow-citizens, and I have thus not hesitated to put down these remarks. Take them, gentlemen, for what they may be worth. They are, at any rate, sincere and fervent; and, whatever judgment others may pass upon them, or whatever attacks may be levelled against them, no one will be able to say that they can have been made to promote any individual advantages. God save the commonwealth! God save the common land!

Francis Lieber, *Contributions to Political Science* (Phila., 1881, 127-136 *passim*).

15. Enlisting Foreign Troops in the
United States (1855)

By PRESIDENT FRANKLIN PIERCE

Pierce was a general in the Mexican War and member of Congress. The extract describes a controversy with Great Britain, the result of which was the dismissal of the British minister to the United States.

It is the traditional and settled policy of the United States to maintain impartial neutrality during the wars which from time to time occur among the great powers of the world. Performing all the duties of neutrality toward the respective belligerent states, we may reasonably expect them not to interfere with our lawful enjoyment of its benefits. Notwithstanding the existence of such hostilities, our citizens retained the individual right to continue all their accustomed pursuits, by land or by sea, at home or abroad, subject only to such restrictions in this relation as the laws of war, the usage of nations, or special treaties may impose; and it is our sovereign right that our territory and jurisdiction shall not be invaded by either of the belligerent parties for the transit of their armies, the operations of their fleets, the levy of troops for their service, the fitting out of cruisers by or against either, or any other act or incident of war. And these undeniable rights of neutrality,

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individual and national, the United States will under no circumstances surrender.

In pursuance of this policy, the laws of the United States do not forbid their citizens to sell to either of the belligerent powers articles contraband of war or take munitions of war or soldiers on board their private ships for transportation; and although in so doing the individual citizen exposes his property or person to some of the hazards of war, his acts do not involve any breach of national neutrality nor of themselves implicate the Government. Thus, during the progress of the present war in Europe, our citizens have, without national responsibility therefor, sold gunpowder and arms to all buyers, regardless of the destination of those articles. Our merchantmen have been, and still continue to be, largely employed by Great Britain and by France in transporting troops, provisions, and munitions of war to the principal seat of military operations and in bringing home their sick and wounded soldiers; but such use of our mercantile marine is not interdicted either by the international or by our municipal law, and therefor does not compromise our neutral relations with Russia.

But our municipal law, in accordance with the law of nations, peremptorily forbids not only foreigners, but our own citizens, to fit out within the United States a vessel to commit hostilities

Franklin Pierce

against any state with which the United States are at peace, or to increase the force of any foreign armed vessel intended for such hostilities against a friendly state.

Whatever concern may have been felt by either of the belligerent powers lest private armed cruisers or other vessels in the service of one might be fitted out in the ports of this country to depredate on the property of the other, all such fears have proved to be utterly groundless. Our citizens have been withheld from any such act or purpose by good faith and by respect for the law.

While the laws of the Union are thus peremptory in their prohibition of the equipment or armament of belligerent cruisers in our ports, they provide not less absolutely that no person shall, within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States, enlist or enter himself, or hire or retain another person to enlist or enter himself, or to go beyond the limits or jurisdiction of the United States with intent to be enlisted or entered, in the service of any foreign state, either as a soldier or as a marine or seaman on board of any vessel of war, letter of marque, or privateer. And these enactments are also in strict conformity with the law of nations, which declares that no state has the right to raise troops for land or sea service in another state without its consent, and that, whether forbidden by the

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municipal law or not, the very attempt to do it without such consent is an attack on the national sovereignty.

Such being the public rights and the municipal law of the United States. . . . It was matter of surprise, to find subsequently that the engagement of persons within the United States to proceed to Halifax, in the British Province of Nova Scotia, and there enlist in the service of Great Britain, was going on extensively, with little or no disguise. Ordinary legal steps were immediately taken to arrest and punish parties concerned, and so put an end to acts infringing the municipal law and derogatory to our sovereignty. Meanwhile suitable representations on the subject were addressed to the British Government.

Thereupon it became known, by the admission of the British Government itself, that the attempt to draw recruits from this country originated with it, or at least had its approval and sanction; but it also appeared that the public agents engaged in it had "stringent instructions" not to violate the municipal law of the United States.

It is difficult to understand how it should have been supposed that troops could be raised here by Great Britain without violation of the municipal law. The unmistakable object of the law was to prevent every such act which if performed

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must be either in violation of the law or in studied evasion of it, and in either alternative the act done would be alike injurious to the sovereignty of the United States.

In the meantime the matter acquired additional importance by the disclosure of the fact that they were prosecuted upon a systematic plan devised by official authority; that recruiting rendezvous had been opened in our principal cities and depots for the reception of recruits established on our frontier, and the whole business conducted under the supervision and by the regular cooperation of British officers, civil and military, some in the North American Provinces and some in the United States. The complicity of those officers in an undertaking which could only be accomplished by defying our laws, throwing suspicion over our attitude of neutrality, and disregarding our territorial rights is conclusively proved by the evidence elicited on the trial of such of their agents as have been apprehended and convicted. . . .

Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (Washington, 1899), V. 331-333 *passim*.

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16. Welcome to Kossuth (1851)

By SENATOR WILLIAM H. SEWARD

Seward's lively interest in freedom all over the world is illustrated by his speech in favor of Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot and exile.

It has been said or intimated that we are not well aware of what we are doing—that we are not well acquainted with the character of Kossuth—that we do not know certainly that he is entitled to these attentions from the American people. Sir, in the course of human events, we see the nations of Europe struggling to throw off their despotic systems of government, and to establish governments upon the principle of republicanism or of constitutional monarchy. Whenever such efforts are made, we see it invariably happen that the existing despotisms of Europe combine to repress those struggles—combine to subdue the people. The consequence is, that despotism is a common cause, and it results also that the cause of constitutional liberty has also become one common cause—the cause of mankind against despotism. Now whatever people leads the way at any time in any crisis in this contest for civil liberty, becomes the representative of the nations of the earth. We once occupied that proud and interesting position, and we engaged the sympathies of civilized men through-

William H. Seward

out the world. No one can deny, that recently Hungary assumed that same position; and the records of our own legislature show that we, in common with the friends of civil liberty in Europe, held Hungary to be the representative of the nations of the earth in this great cause. We had a messenger on the verge of the battlefield ready to acknowledge her independence.

Mr. President, it happens, in the Providence of God, that whenever a nation thus assumes to open this controversy for liberty, in behalf of the nations of the earth, some one man more than another becomes identified with the struggle by his virtues, by his valor, by his wisdom, or by his sufferings, until he eclipses others who may be associated with him, and comes to be regarded by the country itself, in whose behalf he labors and struggles, and by mankind, as the representative of that nation, and of that cause. The deliverance of Switzerland brings up at once the name of William Tell. The struggle of Scotland calls up the name of Wallace; and all over the world no man ever hears the American Revolution spoken of, but it calls up the majestic form of Washington! So it happens that the name of Hungary calls up at once the great, the towering fame of the author, the hero, and the sufferer of the Hungarian Revolution. Now, then, shall we say that we do not know that Kossuth is worthy to be regarded as the friend and advo-

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cate of liberty in his own country? Shall we say that he does not merit the homage paid to him as the leader of the Hungarian Revolution? Hungary herself has set the seal upon his merits, and concluded that question, and it would be as unreasonable and absurd to listen to those who should depreciate the principles or the character of Washington, as it is to stand doubting or hesitating whether, in honoring Kossuth, we are really doing honor to his cause, and the cause of his unfortunate country. . . .

It is an apprehension that, by the adoption of this, or a similar motion, the Congress of the United States will commit itself to some act of intervention in the affairs of Europe by which the government of the United States may be embarrassed in its foreign relations. Mr. President, I am a lover of peace. I shall never freely give my consent to any measure which I shall think will tend to involve this nation in the calamities of foreign war. I believe that our mission is a mission of republicanism. But I believe that we shall best execute it by maintaining peace at home and with all mankind; and if I saw in this measure a step in advance toward the bloody field of contention in the affairs of Europe, I, too, would hesitate long before adopting it. But I see no advance toward any such danger in doing a simple act of national justice and magnanimity. I believe that no man will deny the principle, that

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a nation may do for the cause of liberty in other nations whatever the laws of nations do not forbid. I plant myself upon that principle. What the laws of nations do not forbid, any nation may do for the cause of civil liberty in any other nation, in any other country. Now, the laws of nations do not forbid hospitality. The laws of nations do not forbid us to sympathize with the exile—to sympathize with the overthrown champion of freedom. The laws of nature demand that hospitality, and from the very inmost sources of our nature springs up that sympathy. What is that great epic poem which has filled the second place in the admiration, I had almost said in the affections, of mankind for two thousand years, but the history of an exile flying from the walls of his burning city and devoted state? Sir, the laws of nature require—the laws of nations command hospitality to those who fly from oppression and despair. And this is all that we have done, and all that we propose to do. We have invited Kossuth—we have procured his release from captivity—we have brought him here—and we propose to say to him, standing upon our shores with his eye directed to us, and while we know that the eyes of the civilized world are fixed upon him and us, "Louis Kossuth, in the name of the American people, we bid you a cordial welcome."

William H. Seward, *Works* (N. Y., 1853), I. 175-177 *passim*.

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17. The Mission of America (1852)

By ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS

A Georgian, who throughout his public life emphasized high patriotic ideals. Later vice president of the Confederacy.

IN 1732, the population of the colonies which afterward became the United States, was less, perhaps, than two millions. The population of the United States now is over twenty-three millions. Then an unbroken wilderness extended from a border near us to the distant Pacific. The valley of the Mississippi was reposing under the shade of her primeval forests, . . . unbroken by the voice of civilization. Now behold her teeming population, her cultivated plains, her villages, towns, and cities, springing up as if by magic, and her majestic rivers alive with her accumulating commerce. See the hundreds and thousands of emigrants annually quitting the despotisms of the old world, and taking shelter and protection in this our favored land! To these we give a hearty welcome. We offer a safe retreat for the exile, and a peaceful quiet home for the emigrant, but no theatre for foreign propagandists.

But these are not all the subjects suitable for our contemplation on this occasion. What advancement have we made since this government was formed, in letters, in mechanic arts, in discoveries, in inventions, and in science? Consider

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the number and character of our schools of learning, our academies, colleges, and universities; colleges for the education of women as well as men. See what steam has done under the power and control of American genius, fostered by the influence of our free, wise, and beneficent institutions. Behold the mysterious workings of the telegraph. It was Franklin's honor to "weave his garland of the lightning's wing," and "with the thunder talk as friend to friend." But it has been Morse's glory, in our own day, to seize the spirit of the lightning itself, and to make it the swift messenger of our thoughts. What has caused this mighty change? Need I tell you it is the spirit of our institutions? It is that government which makes us not only one people, but a people with whatever diversity of interests or pursuits having all alike security at home and abroad. That government which heretofore has looked to our own safety, welfare, peace, quiet, prosperity, and domestic tranquillity, without meddling with the affairs of others, further than to give them the influence of a noble example. Shall this state of things continue? Shall we go on in the bright career we have commenced? Have we a national immortality before us? Or is the sun of our glory soon to go down in darkness to rise no more? These are questions which will spring up in the anxious mind; but to them no answer can be given. They involve the subtle

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problems of human destiny. Providence has wisely veiled the future from our vision. All we have to do is with the present. Let us take care that that is done rightly, and we need not fear for what shall come after.

But bear with me when I assure you that I have an abiding, a living hope that there are richer treasures of national greatness in store for us than we have yet attained. You may call it superstition, or call it what you please; but I believe there is a superintending providence that controls the destinies of nations as well as the fortunes of men. When we look at this country, and consider the circumstances under which its settlement by our ancestors was first made, and trace its history from Plymouth and Jamestown to the present day, have we not many evidences to impress our minds with the belief that we are a peculiar and a favorite people, and that we have some high mission yet to perform? See the perils we have passed; see the hand of deliverance when hope has been sinking in despair! How often, in the war of the revolution, in the formation of the constitution, and its adoption by the States, did our fortunes seem to be trembling in an uncertain balance? How often since then have we passed safely through crises of danger, when the stoutest of patriot hearts beat with apprehension that all might be lost?

Some who now hear me, doubtless recollect

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how it was in the darkest hour in the war of 1812; when the Capitol was smouldering in ruins; when the Hartford Convention was in session; when secession and disruption were threatened; when the future assumed its blackest robes and men's spirits sunk within them! It was then that the victory of New Orleans was hailed as the voice of a friendly messenger from some distant world. The great battle had been fought, the victory was won, the war was ended. Peace soon reigned again in the land, and with it came the smiles of fraternal feeling and brotherly love between all parts of the Union. Again, we had the Missouri agitation, which seemed at one time to be the rock on which we should split. Yet the spirit of compromise prevailed. After that came the nullification crisis. At one time a collision of arms seemed to be inevitable; force was preparing against force. Had one gun been fired, who can tell what we should now have been? But in the very last moment the spirit of compromise, the presiding genius of this favorite republic, ruled the hour, and all was safe.

Then, last of all, came the late fearful agitation of the slavery question, the lively recollections of which are so fresh upon the memories of us all. Perhaps at no period in our past history was the danger of disunion ever more imminent and threatening than it was then. Yet dark and terrible as was the night, it was not without a dawn

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—a return of light, and with it hope! The spirit of compromise again hovered over the country, and with it came deliverance! Now, in all this is not the hand of Providence visible? If like contests and conflicts of interests had existed amongst the people of any other nation in the world, would not the sword have been drawn long since? Let us then take new hope for the future. Let the true friends of the country, the friends of the constitution and the principles of the constitution, the friends of the Union upon the principles and for the objects of the Union, never despair. We have a great duty to perform—a grand and high mission to fulfill. We have but begun in our rising ascent. Our forefathers and our fathers did much. But they got only slight glimpses of what we see around us. Our realization of the fruits of their labors are already far above their most sanguine anticipations:

"While, from the bounded level of '*their*' mind,
Short views '*they took*,' nor '*saw*' the lengths behind:
'*We*,' more advanced, behold with strange surprise,
New distant scenes of endless '*progress*' rise.
So pleased at first, the towering Alps we try—
Mount o'er the vales and seem to skim the sky.
The increasing prospect '*starts*' our wandering eyes;
Hills peep o'er hills and Alps on Alps arise!" . . .

Alexander H. Stephens, *Letters and Speeches* (Philadelphia, 1866?), 361-363 *passim*.

18. The Impressions of a Liberty-Loving Immigrant (1852)

By CARL SCHURZ

A German immigrant who became general, diplomat, senator and secretary of the interior.

I HAVE not yet seen much in America, but I have learned much. I have never before lived in a democratic country and been able to observe the conduct of a free people. I confess without a blush that until now I had only a faint conception of it. My political views have undergone a kind of internal revolution since I began to read the book that alone contains the truth—the book of reality. . . . It is true, indeed, that the first sight of this country fills one with dumb amazement. Here you see the principle of individual freedom carried to its ultimate consequences: voluntarily made laws treated with contempt; in another place you notice the crassest religious fanaticism venting itself in brutal acts; on the one hand you see the great mass of the laboring people in complete freedom striving for emancipation, and by their side the speculative spirit of capital plunging into unheard of enterprises; here is a party that calls itself Democratic and is at the same time the mainstay of the institution of slavery; there another party thunders against slavery but bases all its arguments

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on the authority of the Bible and mentally is incredibly abject in its dependence,—at one time it displays an impetuous impulse for emancipation, while at another it has an active lust for oppression;—all these in complete liberty, moving in a confused tumult, one with the other, one by the side of the other. The democrat just arrived from Europe, who has so far lived in a world of ideas and has had no opportunity to see these ideas put into actual, sound practice will ask himself, hesitatingly, Is this, indeed, a free people? Is this a real democracy? Is democracy a fact if it shelters under one cloak such conflicting principles? Is this my ideal? Thus he will doubtingly question himself, as he steps into this new, really *new world*. . . .

Yes, this is humanity when it is free. Liberty breaks the chain of development. All strength, all weakness, all that is good, all that is bad, is here in full view and in free activity. The struggle of principles goes on unimpeded; outward before we can gain inner freedom. He who wishes liberty must not be surprised if men do not appear better than they are. Freedom is the only state in which it is possible for men to learn to know themselves, in which they show themselves as they really are. It is true, the ideal is not necessarily evolved, but it would be an unhappy thought to force the ideal in spite of humanity. . . . Every glance into the political life of

America strengthens my convictions that the aim of a revolution can be nothing else than to make room for the will of the people—in other words, to break every authority which has its organization in the life of the state, and, as far as is possible, to overturn the barriers to individual liberty. The will of the people will have its fling and indulge in all kinds of foolishness—but that is its way; if you want to show it the way and then give it liberty of action, it will, nevertheless, commit its own follies. Each one of these follies clears away something, while the wisest thing that is done for the people accomplishes nothing until the popular judgment has progressed far enough to be able to do it for itself. Until then, conditions must stand *à force de l'autorité*, or they will totter. But if they exist by the force of authority, then democracy is in a bad way. Here in America you can every day see how slightly a people needs to be governed. In fact, the thing that is not named in Europe without a shudder, anarchy, exists here in full bloom. Here are governments but no rulers—governors, but they are clerks. . . . It is only here that you realize how superfluous governments are in many affairs in which, in Europe, they are considered entirely indispensable, and how the possibility of doing something inspires a desire to do it.

Carl Schurz, *Writings* (N. Y., etc., 1913), I. 5-8 *passim*.

CHAPTER XXVII — IS FREEDOM A UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE? (1853-1856)

Conditions in Europe brought about a flood of immigrants from England, Ireland, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, and other parts of Europe to the United States. The principles and methods of popular government were called upon to take in these new elements. Immigrants such as Lieber, and visitors of whom Fredrika Bremer is a good example, united in their conclusion that the United States was one of the best places in the world for the man who depended on his own hands and brain. An effort to discriminate against foreigners by keeping them out of votes and office, commonly called the Know-Nothing Movement, quickly broke down. Efforts were made by so-called filibustering expeditions to aid revolutionists in Cuba and elsewhere. Alongside this, great interest and confidence in the white man, no matter how poor and ignorant, went a contrary theory as to black men. Nearly half the Union insisted that liberty, popular government and self-control had nothing to do with negroes; that their normal status was that of bondmen, and even that it was the duty of nonslaveholding countries to reduce their laborers to the same condition. The argument was that thus could there be a true democracy of these competent Southern whites, who were above both the negro slave and the white wage earner. This theory, if rigorously applied, was plainly unfavorable to the foreign immigrants, and many of them joined in a political movement for putting a stop to the extension of slavery.



*From the engraving by R. Whitechurch for Stephens's
"War Between the States."*

I. Woman in America (1853)

By FREDRIKA BREMER

A spirited Swedish lady who traveled widely and wrote one of the best and most sympathetic books of travel.

THE ideal of the man of America seems to me to be, purity of intention, decision in will, energy in action, simplicity and gentleness in manner and demeanor. Hence it is that there is a something tender and chivalric in his behavior to woman which is infinitely becoming to him. In every woman he respects his own mother.

In the same way it appeared to me that the ideal of the woman of America, of the woman of the New World, is, independence in character, gentleness of demeanor and manner.

The American's ideal of happiness seems to me to be, marriage and home, combined with public activity. To have a wife, his own house and home, his own little piece of land; to take care of these, and to beautify them, at the same time doing some good to the state or to the city—

A Flood of Immigrants

this seems to me to be the object of human life with most men; a journey to Europe to see perfected cities, and—ruins belong to it, as a desirable episode.

Of the American home I have seen enough and heard enough for me to be able to say that the women have, in general, all the rule there which they wish to have. Woman is the centre and the lawgiver in the home of the New World, and the American man loves that it should be so. He wishes that his wife should have her own will at home, and he loves to obey it. In proof of this, I have heard the words of a young man quoted: "I hope that my wife will have her own will in the house, and if she has not, I'll make her have it!" I must, however, say, that in the happy homes in which I lived I saw the wife equally careful to guide herself by the wishes of her husband as he was to indulge hers. Affection and sound reason make all things equal.

The educational institutions for woman are, in general, much superior to those of Europe; and perhaps the most important work which America is doing for the future of humanity consists in her treatment and education of woman. Woman's increasing value as a teacher, and the employment of her as such in public schools, even in those for boys, is a public fact in these states which greatly delights me. Seminaries have been established to educate her for this vocation (I

Fredrika Bremer

hope to be able to visit that at West Newton, in the neighborhood of Boston, and which was originated by Horace Mann). It even seems as if the daughters of New England had a peculiar faculty and love for this employment. Young girls of fortune devote themselves to it. The daughters of poor farmers go to work in the manufactories a sufficient time to earn the necessary sum to put themselves to school, and thus to become teachers in due course. Whole crowds of school-teachers go hence to the Western and Southern States, where schools are daily being established and placed under their direction. The young daughters of New England are universally commended for their character and ability. Even Waldo Emerson, who does not easily praise, spoke in commendation of them. They learn in the schools the classics, mathematics, physics, algebra, with great ease, and pass their examinations like young men. Not long since a young lady in Nantucket, not far from Boston, distinguished herself in astronomy, discovered a new planet, and received, in consequence, a medal from the King of Prussia.

Fredrika Bremer, *Homes of the New World* (N. Y., 1853), I. 190-191.

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2. Irrepressible Expansion (1853)

By SENATOR STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

A Vermonter by birth but grew up in Illinois, of which he was representative and senator. The leading western Democrat. He hated England and had great ideas of American expansion.

I CANNOT close my eyes to the history of this country for the last half century. Fifty years ago the question was being debated in this Senate whether it was wise or not to acquire any territory on the west bank of the Mississippi, and it was then contended that we could never with safety extend beyond that river. It was at that time seriously considered whether the Alleghany Mountains should not be the barrier beyond which we should never pass. At a subsequent date, after we had acquired Louisiana and Florida, more liberal views began to prevail, and it was thought that perhaps we might venture to establish one tier of States west of the Mississippi; but, in order to prevent the sad calamity of an undue expansion of our territory, the policy was adopted of establishing an Indian Territory, with titles in perpetuity, all along the western borders of those States, so that no more new States could possibly be created in that direction. That barrier could not arrest the onward progress of our people. They burst through it, and passed the Rocky Mountains, and were only arrested by

Stephen A. Douglas

the waters of the Pacific. Who, then, is prepared to say that in the progress of events, having met with the barrier of the ocean in our western course, we may not be compelled to turn to the north and to the south for an outlet? . . .

You may make as many treaties as you please to fetter the limbs of this giant republic, and she will burst them all from her, and her course will be onward to a limit which I will not venture to prescribe. Why the necessity of pledging your faith that you will never annex any more of Mexico? Do you know that you will be compelled to do it; that you cannot help it; that your treaty will not prevent it, and that the only effect it will have will be to enable European powers to accuse us of bad faith when the act is done, and associate American faith and Punic faith as synonymous terms? What is the use of your guarantee that you will never erect any fortifications in Central America; never annex, occupy, or colonize any portion of that country? How do you know that you can avoid doing it? If you make the canal, I ask you if American citizens will not settle along its line; whether they will not build up towns at each terminus; whether they will not spread over that country, and convert it into an American State; whether American principles and American institutions will not be firmly planted there? And I ask you

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how many years you think will pass away before you will find the same necessity to extend your laws over your own kindred that you found in the case of Texas? How long will it be before that day arrives? It may not occur in the senator's day, nor mine. But, so certain as this republic exists, so certain as we remain a united people, so certain as the laws of progress which have raised us from a mere handful to a mighty nation shall continue to govern our action, just so certain are these events to be worked out, and you will be compelled to extend your protection in that direction.

Sir, I am not desirous of hastening the day. I am not impatient of the time when it shall be realized. I do not wish to give any additional impulse to our progress. We are going fast enough. But I wish our policy, our laws, our institutions, should keep up with the advance in science, in the mechanic arts, in agriculture, and in every thing that tends to make us a great and powerful nation. Let us look the future in the face, and let us prepare to meet that which cannot be avoided.

C. E. Carr, *Stephen A. Douglas* (Chicago, 1909), 179-180.

3. The Future of the Working Classes (1853)

By RICHARD HILDRETH

A literary man and historiographer of New England, who was much interested in social problems.

THE clergy, the nobles, the kings, the burghers have all had their turn. Is there never to be an *Age of the People*—of the working classes?

Is the suggestion too extravagant, that the new period commencing with the middle of this current century is destined to be that age? Certain it is, that, within the last three quarters of a century, advocates have appeared for the mass of the people, the mere workers, and that movements, even during this age of the deification of money, and of reaction against the theory of human equality, have been made in their behalf such as were never known before.

We may enumerate first in the list of these movements the indignant protest against the African slave trade, and the combination for its suppression into which the governments of Christendom have been forced, by the efforts of a few humane individuals, appealing to the better feelings of their fellow-countrymen, and operating through them on the British and American governments. . . . We may mention next among these movements on behalf of the

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laboring class the abolition of chattel slavery in so many of the ultramarine offshoots from Europe. . . .

We may mention further the subdivision which has been carried so far, in France, of the lands of that country among the actual cultivators; . . .

Let us add the system of savings banks, by which the English laborers for wages have been enabled to invest their savings in a comparatively safe and easy manner, and thus to share in that accumulation of wealth which forms so important an element of power.

Add further the constant advance and development of manufacturing industry, giving employment and high wages to a class of laborers vastly superior in intelligence to the stupid and thoughtless rustics by whom the fields of Europe are generally cultivated. . . .

If the mass of the people are ever to be raised above the service position in which they have been so long and so generally held, there would seem to be only one way in which it can be permanently and effectually done, viz., by imparting to them a vastly greater portion than they have ever yet possessed of those primary elements of power, sagacity, force of will, and knowledge, to be backed by the secondary elements of wealth and combination. Nor does the prospect of thus elevating them appear by any means one altogether so hopeless. . . .

Richard Hildreth

The first great necessity, then, of the human race is the increase of the productiveness of human labor. Science has done much in that respect within the last century, and in those to come is destined to do vastly more. Vast new fields are opening on our American continent, on which labor can be profitably employed. So far from labor being the sole source of wealth, all-sufficient in itself, as certain political economists teach, nothing is more certain than that Europe has long suffered, and still suffers, from a plethora of labor—from being obliged to feed and clothe many for whom it has had nothing remunerative to do. The United States of America have now attained to such a development, that they are able easily to absorb from half a million to a million annually of immigrants from Europe.

The development of productive industry seems then to be at this moment one of the greatest and most crying necessities of the human race. But what is more essential to this development than peace and social order? . . . The greatest obstacle at this moment to the comparative political freedom of Europe, is the vast aggregation of power in the shape of standing armies. But how are these armies possibly to be got rid of, except by a certain interval of uninterrupted quiet, dispensing with their use, and such a contemporaneous increase in the value of labor as

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to make the maintenance in idleness of so many hands, instead of being, as it now is, a sort of substitute for a poor law, and a relief to the overstocked labor market, a useless sacrifice, and an expense too great for any community to submit to? . . .

From a more careful, comprehensive, and profound study of social relations, joined to an interval of peaceful coöperation in the production of great economical results, that we are to hope for the dispersion and extinction of those unfortunate and unfounded antipathies, so rife at present between those who labor with their heads, and those who labor with their hands; those who plan and those who execute—antipathies growing out of prevailing but mistaken theories of politics and political economy, which, by dividing the party of progress into two hostile sections, filled with jealousy, fear and hatred of each other, have contributed so much more than any thing else to betray Samson, shorn, into the hands of the Philistines—jealousies, fears, and hatreds, not only the chief source of the discomfitures recently experienced by the popular cause, but which, so long as they shall continue, will render any further advancement of it hopeless.

The socialist question of the distribution of wealth once raised is not to be blinked out of sight. The claims set up by the socialists, based

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as they are upon philosophic theories of long standing, having, at least some of them, many ardent supporters even in the ranks of those who denounce the socialists the loudest, cannot be settled by acclamations and denunciations, and mutual recriminations, any more than by bayonets and artillery. It is a question for philosophers; and until some solution of it can be reached which both sides shall admit to be conclusive, what the party of progress needs is not action—for which it is at present disqualified by internal dissensions—but deliberation and discussion. The engineers must first bridge this gulf of separation before all the drumming, and fifing, and shouting in the world can again unite the divided column, and put it into effectual motion.

Richard Hildreth, *Theory of Politics* (N. Y., 1853), 267-74 *passim*.

4. "The Voice of the People Is the Voice of God" (1853)

By FRANCIS LIEBER

(See note above, p. 46.)

THE maxim *Vox Populi Vox Dei* is so closely connected with the subjects which we have been examining, and it is so often quoted on grave po-

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litical occasions, that it appears to me proper to conclude this work with an inquiry into the validity of this stately saying. Its poetic boldness and epigrammatic finish, its Latin and lapidary formulation, and its apparent connection of a patriotic love of the people with religious fervor, give it an air of authority and almost of sacredness. Yet history, as well as our own times, shows us that everything depends upon the question who are "the people," and that even if we have fairly ascertained the legitimate sense of this great yet abused term, we frequently find that their voice is anything rather than the voice of God.

If the term people is used for a clamoring crowd, which is not even a constituted part of an organic whole, we would be still more fatally misled by taking the clamor for the voice of the deity. We shall arrive, then, at this conclusion, that in no case can we use the maxim as a test, for, even if we call the people's voice the voice of God in those cases in which the people demand that which is right, we must first know that they do so before we could call it the voice of God. It is no guiding authority; it can sanction nothing. . . .

How shall we ascertain, in modern times, whether anything be the voice of the people? and next, whether that voice be to the voice of God, so that it may command respect? For, unless we

can do this, the whole maxim amounts to no more than a poetic sentence expressing the opinion of an individual, but no rule, no canon.

It is unanimity that indicates the voice of the people? Unanimity in this case can mean only a very large majority. But even unanimity itself is far from indicating the voice of God. Unanimity is commanding only when it is the result of digested and organic public opinion, and even then, we know perfectly well that it may be erroneous and consequently not the voice of God, but simply the best opinion at which erring and sinful men at the time are able to arrive. . . .

Unanimity of itself proves nothing worth being proved for our purpose. In considering unanimity, the first subject that presents itself to us is that remarkable phenomenon called Fashion—a phenomenon well-nigh calculated to baffle the most searching mind, and which has never received the attention it deserves at the hands of the philosopher, in every point of view, whether psychological, moral, economical, or political. Unassisted by any public power, by the leading minds of the age, by religion, literature, or any concerted action, it nevertheless rules, with unbending authority, often in spite of health, comfort, and taste, and it exacts tributes such as no sultan or legislature can levy. While it often spreads ruin among producers and consumers, it is always sure to reach the most absolute Czar

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and subject his taste. Though the head may wear a crown, Fashion puts her shears to its hair, if she has a mind to do so. . . .

If we carefully view the subject of unanimity, we shall find that in the cases in which vast action takes place by impelled masses—and it is in these cases that the maxim is invoked—error is as frequently the basis as truth. It is panic, fanaticism, revenge, lust of gain, and hatred of races that produce most of the sudden and comprehensive impulses. Truth travels slowly. Indeed, all essential progress is typified in the twelve humble men that followed Christ. The voice of God was not then the voice of the people. What the ancients said of the avenging gods, that they are shod with wool, is true of great ideas in history. They approach softly. Great truths always dwell a long time with small minorities, and the real voice of God is often that which rises above the masses, not that which follows them. . . .

The doctrine *Vox populi vox Dei* is essentially unrepblican, as the doctrine that the people may do what they list under the constitution, above the constitution, and against the constitution, is an open avowal of disbelief in self-government.

The true friend of freedom does not wish to be insulted by the supposition that he believes each human individual an erring man, and that nevertheless the united clamor of erring men has a

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character of divinity about it; nor does he desire to be told that the voice of the people, though legitimately and institutionally proclaimed and justly commanding respect and obedience, is divine on that account. He knows that the majority may err, and that he has the right and often the duty to use his whole energy to convince them of their error, and lawfully to bring about a different set of laws. The true and stanch republican wants liberty, but no deification either of himself or others; he wants a firmly built self-government and noble institutions, but no absolutism of any sort—none to practise on others, and none to be practised on himself. He wants no divine right of the people, for he knows very well that it means nothing but the despotic power of insinuating leaders. He wants the real rule of the people, that is, the institutionally organized country, which distinguishes it from the mere mob. For a mob is an unorganic multitude, with a general impulse of action. Woe to the country in which political hypocrisy first calls the people almighty, then teaches that the voice of the people is divine, then pretends to take a mere clamor for the true voice of the people, and lastly gets up the desired clamor. The consequences are fearful, and invariably unfitting for liberty. . . .

However indistinct the meaning of the maxim may be, the idea intended to be conveyed, and the

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imposing character of the saying, have, nevertheless, contributed to produce in some countries a general inability to remain in the opposition—that necessary element of civil liberty. A degree of shame seems there to be attached to a person that does not swim with the broad stream. No matter what flagrant contradictions may take place, or however sudden the changes may be, there seems to exist in every one a feeling of discomfort until he has joined the general current. To differ from the dominant party or the ruling majority appears almost like daring to contend with a deity, or a mysterious yet irrevocable destiny. To dissent is deemed to be malcontent; it seems more than rebellious, it seems traitorous; and this feeling becomes ultimately so general that it seizes the dissenting individuals themselves. They become ashamed, and mingle with the rest. Individuality is destroyed, manly character degenerates, and the salutary effect of parties is forfeited. He that clings to his conviction is put in ban as unnational, and as an enemy to the people. Then arises a man of personal popularity. He ruins the institutions; he bears down everything before him; yet he receives the popular acclaim, and, the voice of the people being the voice of God, it is deemed equally unnational and unpatriotic to oppose him.

Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature* (N. Y., 1888), VI. 26-30 *passim*.

5. In a Land of Freedom (1853)

By DANIEL S. DICKINSON

New York lawyer and senator.

By improvements in physical science, we are placed, as it were, at the doors of our brethren in remote sections of the Union. We converse with them at pleasure, and words are conveyed and returned with the velocity of light. We desire their society, and fly by the mysterious power of steam, at a rate that annihilates space. The facility for the exchange of friendly offices, for the mutual assurances of friendly sentiments, between different sections, if suitably improved, will serve to form and preserve enduring friendships and to mitigate unfounded prejudices; to teach us that we are all children of a common father and alike interested in preserving a common Union. The trials through which our institutions have passed have served to illustrate the sovereign rights of States; to purify the atmosphere, and to teach the necessity as well as value of fraternal regard. The great mass of the people of the United States have spoken upon the subject of the American Union, in a voice not to be mistaken or disregarded with impunity, and they will now go on their mission of freedom and good-will to man rejoicing, and few indeed

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will seek to stir up sectional strife or fan the embers of social discord.

Some there are and must be in a land of freedom, who, drinking lightly at its fountain, its shallow draughts intoxicate; they view society through a reversed medium, and judge it by the standard of their own perverted intellect. They can see nothing good or glorious in our system, and would hurl it down to anarchy and chaos, because they can discover a single speck of darkness upon the sun's disc. They are objects of deep commiseration and pity, and their necessities demand the interposition of a more elevated philanthropy than their own. True conventional freedom, under a government of Constitutional Law, is unsuited to their natures. Designed for some other sphere, but transferred to a land of rational liberty by some mysterious dispensation of Providence, like the sea-shell, which murmurs ever of the ocean and the storm, these political Cassandras are filled with evil auguries, and unite their voices with the croaking despotisms of earth, in denunciation of the land which feeds, shelters, and protects them. Blind like Samson, they regard all the friends of constitutional liberty and law as Philistines, and would feign pull down the pillars of the temple of liberty, that all might perish together. But a generous and patriotic people will cherish, uphold, and protect it from their puny parricidal

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hands, and will protect too these same graceless and degenerate children from their own worst enemies—THEMSELVES.

In the commencement of our history as a people, we saw a frail bark launched upon a tossed and troubled ocean, to cruise in the cause of freedom as an untried experiment. How many perils has that devoted vessel escaped between the Scylla and Charybdis which threatened her pathway! How many vicissitudes has she endured! How many battles of blood has her patriotic crew sustained against the navies of the world! How many prayers have been offered up for her safety and deliverance! What precious interests were confided to her keeping; what priceless treasures committed to her care! And Oh! to see her now, when she has out-riden every storm, and vanquished every foe, with her sails full set, her ensigns streaming, and her joyous crew all buoyant with hope, deep-freighted with the destinies of mankind, and riding lightly before a prosperous breeze—who will not bid her God-speed upon her errand of Mercy?

Daniel S. Dickinson, *Speeches, Correspondence, etc.* (N. Y., 1867), I. 391-393.

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6. Plea for Popular Sovereignty (1854)

By SENATOR STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

Douglas tried to settle the slavery question by putting the decision on the people of territories, before they were admitted as States.

AFFECTION for the Union can never be alienated or diminished by any other party issues than those which are joined upon sectional or geographical lines. When the people of the North shall all be rallied under one banner, and the whole South marshalled under another banner, and each section excited to frenzy and madness by hostility to the institutions of the other, then the patriot may well tremble for the perpetuity of the Union. Withdraw the slavery question from the political arena, and remove it to the States and Territories, each to decide for itself, such a catastrophe can never happen. Then you will never be able to tell, by any senator's vote for or against any measure, from what State or section of the Union he comes.

Why, then, can we not withdraw this vexed question from politics? Why can we not adopt the principle of this bill as a rule of action in all new Territorial organizations? Why can we not deprive these agitators of their vocation, and render it impossible for senators to come here

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upon bargains on the slavery question? I believe that the peace, the harmony, and perpetuity of the Union require us to go back to the doctrines of the Revolution, to the principles of the Constitution, to the principles of the compromise of 1850, and leave the people under the Constitution, to do as they may see proper in respect to their own internal affairs.

Mr. President, I have not brought this question forward as a Northern man or as a Southern man. I am unwilling to recognize such divisions and distinctions. I have brought it forward as an American senator, representing a State which is true to this principle, and which has approved of my action in respect to the Nebraska bill. I have brought it forward not as an act of justice to the South more than to the North. I have presented it especially as an act of justice to the people of those Territories, and of the States to be formed therefrom, now and in all time to come.

I have nothing to say about Northern rights or Southern rights. I know of no such divisions or distinctions under the Constitution. The bill does equal and exact justice to the whole Union, and every part of it; it violates the rights of no State or Territory, but places each on a perfect equality, and leaves the people thereof to the free enjoyment of all their rights under the Constitution.

Now, sir, I wish to say to our Southern friends,

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that if they desire to see this great principle carried out, now is their time to rally around it, to cherish it, preserve it, make it the rule of action in all future time. If they fail to do it now, and thereby allow the doctrine of interference to prevail, upon their heads the consequence of that interference must rest. To our Northern friends, on the other hand, I desire to say, that from this day henceforward, they must rebuke the slander which has been uttered against the South, that they desire to legislate slavery into the Territories. The South has vindicated her sincerity, her honor, on that point, by bringing forward a provision, negating, in express terms, any such effect as a result of this bill. I am rejoiced to know that, while the proposition to abrogate the eighth section of the Missouri act comes from a free State, the proposition to negative the conclusion that slavery is thereby introduced comes from a slaveholding State. Thus, both sides furnish conclusive evidence that they go for the principle, and the principle only, and desire to take no advantage of any possible misconstruction.

Mr. President, I feel that I owe an apology to the Senate for having occupied their attention so long, and a still greater apology for having discussed the question in such an incoherent and desultory manner. But I could not forbear to claim the right of closing this debate. I thought

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gentlemen would recognize its propriety when they saw the manner in which I was assailed and misrepresented in the course of this discussion, and especially by assaults still more disreputable to some portions of the country. These assaults have had no other effect upon me than to give me courage and energy for a still more resolute discharge of duty. I say frankly that, in my opinion, this measure will be as popular at the North as at the South, when its provisions and principles shall have been fully developed and become well understood. The people at the North are attached to the principles of self-government; and you cannot convince them that that is self-government which deprives a people of the right of legislating for themselves, and compels them to receive laws which are forced upon them by a Legislature in which they are not represented. We are willing to stand upon this great principle of self-government everywhere; and it is to us a proud reflection that, in this whole discussion, no friend of the bill has urged an argument in its favor which could not be used with the same propriety in a free State as in a slave State, and *vice versa*. But no enemy of the bill has used an argument which would bear repetition one mile across Mason and Dixon's line. Our opponents have dealt entirely in sectional appeals. The friends of the bill have discussed a great principle of universal application, which can be sustained

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by the same reasons, and the same arguments, in every time and in every corner of the Union.

C. E. Carr, *Stephen A. Douglas* (Chicago, 1909), 215-217.

7. The Philosophy of Slavery (1854)

By ABRAHAM LINCOLN

From 1854 on, Lincoln was the clearest-minded spokesman of the antislavery cause and thought out the real issues of the conflict between the sections.

EQUALITY in society alike beats inequality, whether the latter be of the British aristocratic sort or of the domestic slavery sort. We know Southern men declare that their slaves are better off than hired laborers among us. How little they know whereof they speak! There is no permanent class of hired laborers amongst us. Twenty-five years ago I was a hired laborer. The hired laborer of yesterday labors on his own account to-day, and will hire others to labor for him to-morrow. Advancement—improvement in condition—is the order of things in a society of equals. As labor is the common burden of our race, so the effort of some to shift their share of the burden onto the shoulders of others is the great durable curse of the race. Originally a curse for transgression upon the whole race, when, as by slavery, it is concen-

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trated on a part only, it becomes the double-refined curse of God upon his creatures.

Free labor has the inspiration of hope; pure slavery has no hope. The power of hope upon human exertion and happiness is wonderful. The slave-master himself has a conception of it, and hence the system of tasks among slaves. The slave whom you cannot drive with the lash to break seventy-five pounds of hemp in a day, if you will task him to break a hundred, and promise him pay for all he does over, he will break you a hundred and fifty. You have substituted hope for the rod. And yet perhaps it does not occur to you that to the extent of your gain in the case, you have given up the slave system and adopted the free system of labor.

If A can prove, however conclusively, that he may of right enslave B, why may not B snatch the same argument and prove equally that he may enslave A? You say A is white and B is black. It is color, then; the lighter having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule you are to be slave to the first man you meet with a fairer skin than your own. You do not mean color exactly? You mean the whites are intellectually the superiors of the blacks, and therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule you are to be slave to the first man you meet with an intellect superior to your own. But, say you, it is a question of

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interest, and if you make it your interest you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest he has the right to enslave you. . . .

The ant who has toiled and dragged a crumb to his nest will furiously defend the fruit of his labor against whatever robber assails him. So plain that the most dumb and stupid slave that ever toiled for a master does constantly know that he is wronged. So plain that no one, high or low, ever does mistake it, except in a plainly selfish way; for although volume upon volume is written to prove slavery a very good thing, we never hear of the man who wishes to take the good of it by being a slave himself.

Most governments have been based, practically, on the denial of the equal rights of men as I have, in part, stated them; ours began by affirming those rights. They said, some men are too ignorant and vicious to share in government. Possibly so, said we; and, by your system, you would always keep them ignorant and vicious. We proposed to give all a chance; and we expected the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant wiser, and all better and happier together.

We made the experiment, and the fruit is before us. Look at it, think of it. Look at it in its aggregate grandeur, of extent of country, and numbers of population—of ship, and steamboat, and railroad. . . .

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Thus we see that the plain, unmistakable spirit of that age toward slavery was hostility to the principle and toleration only by necessity.

But now it is to be transformed into a "sacred right." Nebraska brings it forth, places it on the highroad to extension and perpetuity, and with a pat on its back says to it, "Go, and God speed you." Henceforth it is to be the chief jewel of the nation—the very figurehead of the ship of state. Little by little, but steadily as man's march to the grave, we have been giving up the old for the new faith. Nearly eighty years ago we began by declaring that all men are created equal; but now from that beginning we have run down to the other declaration, that for some men to enslave others is a "sacred right of self-government." These principles cannot stand together. They are as opposite as God and Mammon; and whoever holds to the one must despise the other. When Pettit, in connection with his support of the Nebraska bill, called the Declaration of Independence "a self-evident lie," he only did what consistency and candor require all other Nebraska men to do. Of the forty-odd Nebraska senators who sat present and heard him, no one rebuked him. Nor am I apprised that any Nebraska newspaper, or any Nebraska orator, in the whole nation has ever yet rebuked him. If this had been said among

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Marion's men, Southerners though they were, what would have become of the man who said it? If this had been said to the men who captured André, the man who said it would probably have been hung sooner than André was. If it had been said in old Independence Hall seventy-eight years ago, the very doorkeeper would have throttled the man and thrust him into the street. Let no one be deceived. The spirit of seventy-six and the spirit of Nebraska are utter antagonisms; and the former is being rapidly displaced by the latter.

Fellow-countrymen, Americans, South as well as North, shall we make no effort to arrest this? Already the liberal party throughout the world express the apprehension "that the one retrograde institution in America is undermining the principles of progress, and fatally violating the noblest political system the world ever saw." This is not the taunt of enemies, but the warning of friends. Is it quite safe to disregard it—to despise it? Is there no danger to liberty itself in discarding the earliest practice and first precept of our ancient faith? In our greedy chase to make profit of the negro, let us beware lest we "cancel and tear in pieces" even the white man's charter of freedom.

Our republican robe is soiled and trailed in the dust. Let us repurify it. Let us turn and wash it white in the spirit, if not the blood, of the

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Revolution. Let us turn slavery from its claims of "moral right" back upon its existing legal rights and its arguments of "necessity." Let us return it to the position our fathers gave it, and there let it rest in peace. Let us readopt the Declaration of Independence, and with it the practices and policy which harmonize with it. Let North and South—let all Americans—let all lovers of liberty everywhere join in the great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union, but we shall have so saved it as to make and to keep it forever worthy of the saving. We shall have so saved it that the succeeding millions of free happy people, the world over, shall rise up and call us blessed to the latest generations. . . .

Abraham Lincoln, *Early Speeches* (N. Y., 1907), 216-264 *passim*.

8. A Southern Opinion of the Know-Nothings (1855)

By REPRESENTATIVE ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS

The Know-Nothing movement was a short-lived, anti-foreign, political party.

You ask me what are my opinions and views of this new party called "Know-Nothings," with a request that you be permitted to publish them. My opinions and views thus solicited, shall be

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given most cheerfully, and as fully and clearly as my time, under the pressure of business, will allow. You can do with them as you please—publish them or not, as you like. They are the views of a private citizen. I am at present, to all intents and purposes whatsoever, literally *one of the people*. I hold no office nor seek any, and as one of the people I shall speak to you and them on this, and on all occasions, with that frankness and independence which it becomes a freeman to bear towards his fellows. And in giving my views of “Know-Nothingism,” I *most truly* say, that I really “know nothing” about the principles, aims or objects of the party I am about to speak of—they are all kept secret—being communicated and made known only to the initiated, and not to these until after being first duly pledged and sworn. This, to me, is a very great objection to the whole organization. All political principles, which are sought to be carried out in legislation by any body or set of men in a republic, in my opinion ought to be openly avowed and publicly proclaimed. *Truth* never shuns the light nor shrinks from investigation—or at least it *ought never to do it*. Hiding places, or secret coverts, are natural resorts for error. It is, therefore, a circumstance quite sufficient to excite suspicion against the *truth* to see it pursuing such a course. And in republics, where free discussion and full investigation by a virtuous

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and intelligent people is allowed, there never can be any just grounds to fear any danger even from the greatest errors either in religion or politics. All questions, therefore, relating to the government of a free people, ought to be made known, clearly understood, fully discussed, and understandingly acted upon. Indeed, I do not believe that a republican government can last long, where this is not the case. In my opinion, no man is fit to represent a free people who has any private or secret objects, or aims, that he does not openly avow, or who is not ready and willing, at all times, when required or asked, candidly and *truthfully*, to proclaim to the assembled multitude not only his principles, but his views and sentiments upon all questions that may come before him in his representative capacity. It was on this *basis* that representative government was founded, and on this alone can it be maintained in purity and safety. And if any secret party shall ever be so far successful in this country as to bring the government in all its departments and functions under the baneful influence of its control and power, political *ruin* will inevitably ensue. No truth in politics can be more easily and firmly established, either by reason or from history, upon principle or authority, than this. These are my opinions candidly expressed.

I think of all the Christian denominations in the United States, the Catholics are the last that

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southern people should join in attempting to put under the ban of civil proscription. For as a church they have never *warred* against us or our peculiar institutions. No man can say as much of New England Baptists, Presbyterians, or Methodists; the long roll of abolition petitions with which Congress has been so much excited and had agitated for years past, come not from the Catholics; their pulpits at the north are not desecrated every Sabbath with anathemas against slavery. And of the *three thousand* New England clergymen who sent the anti-Nebraska memorial to the Senate last year, not one was a Catholic, as I have been informed and believe. Why then should we southern men join the Puritans of the North to *proscribe* from office the Catholics on account of their religion. Let them and their religion be as bad as they can be, or as their accusers say they are, they cannot be worse than these same *puritanical* accusers, who started this persecution against them, say that *we are*. . . .

And now, as to the other idea—the proscription of foreigners—and more particularly that view of it which looks to the denial of citizenship to all those who may hereafter seek a home in this country, and choose to cast their lots and destinies with us. This is a favorite idea with many who have not thought of its effects or reflected much upon its consequences. The abrogation of the naturalization laws would not stop immigration,

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nor would the extension of the term of probation, to the period of twenty-one years, do it. This current of migration from east to west, this exodus of the excess of population from the old to the new world, which commenced with the settlement of this continent by Europeans, would still go on. And what would be the effect, even under the most modified form of the proposed measure—that is of an extension of the period from five to twenty-one years, before citizenship should be granted? At the end of the first twenty-one years from the commencement of the operation of the law, we should have several millions of people in our midst—men of our own race—occupying the unenviable position of being a “degraded caste” in society, a species of serfs without the just franchise of a *freeman* or the needful protection due to a *slave*. This would be at war with all my ideas of American republicanism as I have been taught them, and gloried in them from youth up. If there be *danger* now to our institutions, (as some seem to imagine, but which I am far from feeling or believing,) from foreigners as a class, would not the danger be greatly enhanced by the proposed remedy? . . .

I will not say that *no foreigner* has ever been untrue to the constitution; but, as *a class*, they certainly have not proven themselves so to be. Indeed, I know of but one class of people in the United States at this time that I look upon as

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dangerous to the country. That class are neither foreigners nor Catholics—they are those *natives born* at the North who are disloyal to the constitution of that country which gave them birth, and under whose beneficent institutions they have been reared and nurtured. Many of them are “Know-Nothings.” This class of men at the North, of which the Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Connecticut “Know-Nothing” legislatures are but samples, I consider as our worst enemies. And to put them down, I will join, as political allies now and forever, all true patriots at the North and South, whether native or adopted, Jews or Gentiles. . . .

Alexander H. Stephens, *Letters and Speeches* (Philadelphia, 1866[?]), 459-468 *passim*.

9. An Exaltation of the Immigrant (1855)

By SENATOR CHARLES SUMNER

The relative number of immigrants in the '50s was larger than it is at present.

It is proposed to attaint men for religion, and also for birth. If this object can prevail, vain are the triumphs of Civil Freedom in its many hard-fought fields, vain is that religious toleration which we profess. The fires of Smithfield,

Charles Sumner

he tortures of the Inquisition, the proscriptions of Non-Conformists may be all revived. Mainly to escape these outrages, dictated by a dominant religious sect, was our country early settled: in one place by Pilgrims, who sought independence; in another by Puritans, who disowned bishops; in another by Episcopalians, who take their name from bishops; in another by Quakers, who set at nought all forms; and in yet another by Catholics, who look to the Pope as spiritual father. Slowly among the struggling sects was evolved that great idea of the equality of all men before the law without regard to religious belief; nor can any party organize a proscription merely for religious belief, without calling in question this well-established principle. But Catholics are mostly foreigners, and on this account are condemned. Let us see if there be any reason in this; and here indulge me with one word on foreigners.

With the ancient Greeks a foreigner was a *barbarian*, and with the ancient Romans he was an *enemy*. In early modern times the austerity of this judgment was relaxed. . . . Originally settled from England, the Republic has been strengthened and enriched by generous contributions of population from Scotland, Ireland, Switzerland, Sweden, France, and Germany; and the cry is, Still they come! At no time since the discovery of the New World has the army of emi-

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grants pressed so strongly upon us. More than one quarter of a million are annually landed on our shores. The manner in which they shall be received is a problem of national policy.

All will admit that any influence which they bring, hostile to our institutions, calculated to substitute priestcraft for religion and bigotry for Christianity, must be deprecated and opposed. All will admit, too, that there must be some assurance of their purpose to become not merely consumers of the fruits of our soil but useful, loyal, and permanent members of our community, upholders of the general welfare. With this simple explanation, I cannot place any check upon the welcome to foreigners. There are our broad lands, stretching towards the setting sun; let them come and take them. Ourselves children of the Pilgrims of a former generation, let us not turn from the Pilgrims of the present. Let the home founded by our emigrant fathers continue open in its many mansions to the emigrants of to-day.

The history of our country, in its humblest as well as most exalted spheres, testifies to the merit of foreigners. Their strong arms have helped furrow our broad territory with canals, and stretch in every direction the iron rail. They fill our workshops, navigate our ships, and even till our fields. Go where you will among the hardy sons of toil on land or sea, and there you

Charles Sumner

find industrious and faithful foreigners bending their muscles to the work. At the bar and in the high places of commerce you find them. Enter the retreats of learning, and there too you find them, shedding upon our country the glory of science. Nor can any reflection be cast upon foreigners, coming for hospitality now, which will not glance at once upon the distinguished living and the illustrious dead,—upon the Irish Montgomery, who perished for us at the gates of Quebec,—upon Pulaski the Pole, who perished for us at Savannah,—upon De Kalb and Steuben, the generous Germans, who aided our weakness by their military experience,—upon Paul Jones, the Scotchman, who lent his unsurpassed courage to the infant thunders of our navy,—also upon those great European liberators, Kosciusko of Poland, and Lafayette of France, each of whom paid his earliest vows to Liberty in our cause. Nor should this list be confined to military characters, so long as we gratefully cherish the name of Alexander Hamilton, who was born in the West Indies, and the name of Albert Gallatin, who was born in Switzerland, and never, to the close of his octogenarian career, lost the French accent of his boyhood,—both of whom rendered civic services to be commemorated among the victories of peace.

Charles Sumner, *Works* (Boston, 1875), IV. 76-79 *passim*.

A Flood of Immigrants

10. Central Idea of Equality (1856)

By ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(See note above, p. 176.)

OUR government rests in public opinion. Whoever can change public opinion can change the government practically just so much. Public opinion, on any subject, always has a "central idea," from which all its minor thoughts radiate. That "central idea" in our political public opinion at the beginning was, and until recently has continued to be, "the equality of men." And although it has always submitted patiently to whatever of inequality there seemed to be as matter of actual necessity, its constant working has been a steady progress towards the practical equality of all men. The late presidential election was a struggle by one party to discard that central idea and to substitute for it the opposite idea that slavery is right in the abstract, the workings of which as a central idea may be the perpetuity of human slavery and its extension to all countries and colors. Less than a year ago the Richmond "Enquirer," an avowed advocate of slavery, regardless of color, in order to favor his views, invented the phrase "State equality," and now the President, in his message, adopts the "Enquirer's" catch-phrase, telling us the people "have asserted the constitutional equality of each and

Abraham Lincoln

all of the States of the Union as States." The President flatters himself that the new central idea is completely inaugurated; and so indeed it is, so far as the mere fact of a presidential election can inaugurate it. To us it is left to know that the majority of the people have not yet declared for it, and to hope that they never will. All of us who did not vote for Mr. Buchanan, taken together, are a majority of four hundred thousand. But in the late contest we were divided between Frémont and Fillmore. Can we not come together for the future? Let every one who really believes, and is resolved, that free society is not and shall not be a failure, and who can conscientiously declare that in the past contest he has done only what he thought best, let every such one have charity to believe that every other one can say as much. Thus let bygones be bygones; let past differences as nothing be; and with steady eye on the real issue, let us reinaugurate the good old "central ideas" of the republic. We can do it. The human heart is with us; God is with us. We shall again be able not to declare that "all States are equal," nor yet that "all citizens are equal," but to renew the broader, better declaration, including both these and much more, that "all men are created equal." . . .

Nicolay & Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (N. Y., 1890), II. 44-45.

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II. The Negro Enslaved for His Own Good (1856)

By ALBERT TAYLOR BLEDSOE

Professor in the University of Virginia.

THE song now is,—“Well, suppose the negroes will not work: they are FREE! They can now do as they list, and there is no man to hinder.” Ah, yet! they can now, at their own sweet will, stretch themselves “under their gracefully-waving groves,” and be lulled to sleep amid the sound of waterfalls and the song of birds.

Such, precisely, is the paradise for which the negro sighs, except that he does not care for the waterfalls and the birds. But it should be remarked, that when sinful man was driven from the only Paradise that earth has ever seen, he was doomed to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow. This doom he cannot reverse. Let him make of life—as the Haytian negroes do—“one long day of unprofitable ease,” and he may dream of Paradise, or the abolitionists may dream for him. But while he dreams, the laws of nature are sternly at their work. Indolence benumbs his feeble intellect, and inflames his passions. Poverty and want are creeping on him. Temptation is surrounding him; and vice, with all her motley train, is winding fast her deadly coils around his very soul, and making him the devil’s slave, to

Albert Taylor Bledsoe

do his work upon the earth. Thus, the blossoms . . . are *fine words*, and the fruits are *death*.

"If but two hours' labor per day," says Theodore Parker, "are necessary for the support of each colored man, I know not why he should toil longer." You know not, then, why the colored man should work more than two hours a day? Neither does the colored man himself. You know not why he should have any higher or nobler aim in life than to supply his few, pressing, animal wants? Neither does he. You know not why he should think of the future, or provide for the necessities of old age? Neither does he. You know not why he should take thought for seasons of sickness? Neither does he; and hence his child often dies under his own eyes, for the want of medical attendance. You know now that the colored man, who begins with working only two a day, will soon end with ceasing from all regular employment, and live, in the midst of filth, by stealing or other nefarious means? In one word, you know not why the colored man should not live like the brute, in and for the present merely—blotting out all the future from his plans of life? If, indeed, you really know none of these things, then we beg you to excuse us, if *we* do not know why you should assume to teach our senators wisdom;—if we do not know why the cobbler should not stick to his last, and all such preachers to their pulpits. . . .

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No doubt it is very hard on lazy men that they should be compelled to work. It is for this reason that Montesquieu calls such slavery "the most cruel that is to be found among men;" by which he evidently means that it is the most cruel, though necessary, because those on whom it is imposed are least inclined to work. If he had only had greater experience of negro slavery, the hardship would have seemed far less to him. For though the negro is naturally lazy, and too improvident to work for himself, he will often labor for a master with a right good will, and with a loyal devotion to his interests. He is, indeed, often prepared, and made ready for labor, because he feels that, in his master, he has a protector and a friend.

But whether labor be a heavy burden or a light, it must be borne. The good of the lazy race, and the good of the society into which they have been thrown, both require them to bear this burden, which is, after all and at the worst, far lighter than that of a vagabond life. "Nature cries aloud," says the abolitionist, "for freedom." Nature, we reply, demands that man shall work, and her decree must be fulfilled. For ruin, as we have seen, is the bitter fruit of disobedience to her will.

Albert Taylor Bledsoe, *An Essay on Liberty and Slavery* (Phila., 1856), 260-267 *passim*.

12. Assistance to Latin-American Revolutionists (1856)

By GOVERNOR JOHN A. QUITMAN

(See note above, p. 97.) Quitman was one of a body of men who were trying to annex Latin-American territory.

"As matters now stand, and if we may judge from the past, there is little dependence to be placed in the good offices of the government of the United States in fostering the prosperity and establishing the real and substantial independence of Central America. As you justly state, this can now be accomplished by the people of the United States alone; and this they can and will do if left to themselves, without either violating the law of nations, or the neutrality law if construed strictly according both to its letter and spirit, and not by over-zealous pettifoggers hungering as well for fees of office as for the reputation of vigilant officers. The laws of nature as well as of nations (except in unmitigated despotisms) permit every man to expatriate himself at pleasure.

A large portion of the present citizens of the United States availed themselves of this natural right to leave their country and come hither to live and die. The Germans especially have been in the habit of organizing into

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little communities at home, under the eye of their own government, for the purpose of emigration, and no one ever inquired whether they furnished themselves with arms or not, or whether they became soldiers, or artisans, or husbandmen, on their arrival in this country, or at any subsequent period. All know, however, that one of the highest obligations of an emigrant citizen is that of bearing arms in defence of his adopted country against the world.

“But, in what is called the freest country in the world, it seems, by the construction given to our neutrality law, our citizens are prohibited from the exercise of this universal right of expatriation; or, if they emigrate, they must go singly and without arms, though their journey may be full of perils, and their destined home in a country where there is great reason to apprehend they may be placed under the necessity of defending themselves, their property, their wives, and their children by force of arms. In this point of view, the neutrality law of 1819 is a gross infringement of the favored rights of the citizen. It confers on every foreign minister, foreign consul, or foreign agent, the power to arrest the lawful business of every free citizen, by simply testifying himself, or suborning some instrument to testify, that he has reason to believe or suspect that he *contemplates* a violation of the neutrality laws. Such cases have happened in New York, and

John A. Quitman

might have occurred at any other port, had there been such a loyal consul as Mr. Barclay, and such a vigilant district attorney as Mr. M'Keon, who seems at least as zealous in indicating so-called filibusters as actual kidnappers. I could say much more on this subject, most especially on the danger of conferring on government or any of its officers the right of arresting citizens on mere suspicion—not of having violated, but of intending to violate a law. Such a power ought never to be conferred on any government, much less on any public officer. It may, as you well know, be converted into an engine of oppression as dangerous to the rights of our citizens as the unbridled will of a despot. Suspicion, like necessity, has no law, but may be excited by the most innocent actions; and the greatest coward is always the most suspicious. It is only in time of war, or when the existence of our country is in imminent peril, that mere suspicion is a justifiable ground for outraging the favored rights of the citizen. . . .

Claiborne, *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman* (N. Y., 1860), II. 221-223.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD (1857-1860)

The main question which occupied the minds of politicians, statesmen, and the public at large from 1845 to 1860 was the nature and the future of slavery. Involved in it was a movement for reviving the slave trade, so as to make slavery more profitable; and a desire to annex Cuba, Central America, or Mexico, as slaveholding territory. A new issue was raised by Douglas's theory of popular sovereignty, or "squatter sovereignty," by which any master might take a slave to any territory and the people of the territory should decide whether he might stay there. The most spectacular feature of this discussion was the joint debate between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas in 1858, in which Lincoln applied the principles of the Declaration of Independence to the negro as well as to the white man. He also took up the cause of labor against the theory that bondage was its normal condition. The most aggressive method of attacking slavery was shown by John Brown in his attempt to raise a slave insurrection in Harper's Ferry. The general effect of these three years was to clarify the political atmosphere by bringing clearly before the minds of the whole American people that, as Lincoln put it, "a house divided against itself cannot stand."



From a particularly characteristic daguerreotype.

I. Shall Part of Mexico Be Annexed? (1857)

By FREDERICK LAW OLNSTED

A Northern farmer who visited the Southwest as a newspaper correspondent. Afterward a distinguished landscape gardener.

THERE is a general opinion that portions of Mexico, adjoining Texas, are, sooner or later, "destined" to be annexed to the Union, to add to the number and power of the Slave States. An examination of the character of the country in question serves to materially diminish any such probabilities. If a line be drawn from the mouth of the Rio Grande, due west (along the twenty-sixth parallel) to the Pacific, the remaining territory of Mexico will be divided nearly equally; but, in the northern half, though fine pastures and valuable mines might be acquired, *no cotton lands* are to be found. The only exceptions, of consequence, are those described near the present boundary, and a few sunny valleys along the short, quick rivers of Sonora.

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The fertile lands of our part of the continent, lying in tracts suitable for the formation of states, are, in short, exhausted, and the prime motive for further extension, disregarding mere political influences, is wanting.

There are other difficulties. We have not yet made the experiment, in our experience of annexations, of absorbing any notable amount of resident foreign population. This territory contains upwards of half a million of Mexicans. The character and numbers of these people, and the physical peculiarities of their occupied lands, are such as to render it improbable that slavery can ever be extensively introduced, or naturalized among them. No country could be selected better adapted to a fugitive and clandestine life, and no people among whom it would be more difficult to enforce the regulations vital to slavery.

The Mexican masses are vaguely considered as degenerate and degraded Spaniards; it is, at least, equally correct to think of them as improved and Christianized Indians. In their tastes and social instincts, they approximate the African. The difference between them and the negro is smaller, and is less felt, I believe, than that between the northern and southern European races. There are many Mexicans of mixed negro blood, who, in Northern Mexico, bear less suspicion of inferiority than our proletarian naturalized citizens. There are thousands in re-

Frederick Law Olmsted

spectable social positions whose color and physiognomy would subject them, in Texas, to be sold by the sheriff as negro-estrays who cannot be allowed at large without detriment to the commonwealth.

There is, besides, between our Southern American and the Mexican, an unconquerable antagonism of character, which will prevent any condition of order where the two come together. The Mexicans, in our little intercourse with them, we found as different as possible from what all Texan reports would have led us to expect. . . .

They are considered to be heathen; not acknowledged as "white folks." Inevitably they are dealt with insolently and unjustly. They fear and hate the ascendant race, and involuntarily associate and sympathize with the negroes.

Thus, wherever slavery in Texas has been carried in a wholesale way, into the neighborhood of Mexicans, it has been found necessary to treat them as outlaws. Guaranteed, by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, equal rights with all citizens of the United States and of Texas, the whole native population of county after county has been driven, by the formal proceedings of substantial planters, from its homes, and forbidden, on pain of no less punishment than instant death, to return to the vicinity of the plantations.

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This is sufficient indication of the nature of the impediments to any further advance of slavery in the southwest. Isolated noisy attempts at conquest will, no doubt, be made by border adventures, but any permanent establishment of slavery beyond the Rio Grande is intrinsically improbable, unless the real speculators can arrange to have the army of the United States placed at their disposal. For this, it is true, precedent is not wanting. The population of Tamaulipas and New Leon, first to be encountered, is, however, a long-established one, and too numerous for expulsion; it will have ready resort to malarious jungles, chaparral covers and maintain fastnesses; to perpetual incendiarism and guerilla descents, nor will it be withheld from resistance to usurpation and tyranny by reverence for the name of Constitution and Law.

Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey through Texas* (N. Y., 1857), 453-457 *passim*.

George Fitzhugh

2. The Slave Trade Glorified (1857)

By GEORGE FITZHUGH

A Virginia lawyer and vigorous defender of slavery. The great rise in the money quotations of slaves led to a determined effort to reopen the slave trade which was forbidden in 1807.

THE negro slaves of the South are the happiest, and, in some sense, the freest people in the world. The children and the aged and infirm work not at all, and yet have all the comforts and necessities of life provided for them. They enjoy liberty, because they are oppressed neither by care nor labor. The women do little hard work, and are protected from the despotism of their husbands by their masters. The negro men and stout boys work, on the average, in good weather, not more than nine hours a day. The balance of their time is spent in perfect abandon. Besides, they have their Sabbaths and holidays. White men, with so much of license and liberty, would die of ennui; but negroes luxuriate in corporal and mental repose. With their faces upturned to the sun, they can sleep at any hour; and quiet sleep is the greatest of human enjoyments. "Blessed be the man who invented sleep." 'Tis happiness in itself—and results from contentment with the present, and confident assurance of the future. We do not know whether free laborers ever sleep.

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They are fools to do so; for, whilst they sleep, the wily and watchful capitalist is devising means to ensnare and exploitate them. The free laborer must work or starve. He is more of a slave than the negro, because he works longer and harder for less allowance than the slave, and has no holiday, because the cares of life with him begin when its labors end. He has no liberty, and not a single right. We know, 'tis often said, air and water are common property, which all have equal right to participate and enjoy; but this is utterly false. The appropriation of the lands carries with it the appropriation of all on or above the lands, *usque ad cælum, aut ad inferos*. A man cannot breathe the air without a place to breathe it from, and all places are appropriated. All water is private property "to the middle of the stream," except the ocean, and that is not fit to drink.

Free laborers have not a thousandth part of the rights and liberties of negro slaves. Indeed, they have not a single right or a single liberty, unless it be the right or liberty to die. But the reader may think that he and other capitalists and employers are freer than negro slaves. Your capital would soon vanish if you dared indulge in the liberty and abandon of negroes. You hold your wealth and position by the tenure of constant watchfulness, care, and circumspection. You never labor; but you are never free.

Where a few own the soil, they have unlimited

George Fitzhugh

power over the balance of society, until domestic slavery comes in, to compel them to permit this balance of society to draw a sufficient and comfortable living from "terra mater." Free society asserts the rights of a few to the earth—slavery maintains that it belongs, in different degrees, to all.

But, reader, well may you follow the slave-trade. It is the only trade worth following, and slaves the only property worth owning. All other is worthless, a mere *caput mortuum*, except in so far as it vests the owner with the power to command the labors of others—to enslave them. Give you a palace, ten thousand acres of land, sumptuous clothes, equipage and every other luxury; and with your artificial wants, you are poorer than Robinson Crusoe, or the lowest working man, if you have no slaves to capital, or domestic slaves. Your capital will not bring you an income of a cent, nor supply one of your wants, without labor. Labor is indispensable to give value to property, and if you owned everything else, and did not own labor, you would be poor. But fifty thousand dollars means, and is, fifty thousand dollars' worth of slaves. You can command, without touching on that capital, three thousand dollars' worth of labor per annum. You could do no more were you to buy slaves with it, and then you would be cumbered with the cares of governing and providing for them. You are a slaveholder

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now, to the amount of fifty thousand dollars, with all the advantages, and none of the cares and responsibilities of a master.

"Property in man" is what all are struggling to obtain. Why should they not be obliged to take care of man, their property, as they do of their horses and their hounds, their cattle and their sheep? Now, under the delusive name of liberty, you work him "from morn to dewy eve"—from infancy to old age—then turn them out to starve. You treat your horses and hounds better. Capital is a cruel master; the free slave trade, the commonest, yet the cruelest of trades.

Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of Am. Lit.* (N. Y., 1888), VI. 324-325.

3. Appeal to Nonslaveholding Whites (1857)

By HINTON R. HELPER

A North Carolina poor white, afterward consul and minister in South American states, who conceived the idea of organizing his fellows against the slaveholding class

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that the white non-slaveholders of the South, are in the majority, as five to one, they have never yet had any part or lot in framing the laws under which they live. There is no legislation except for the benefit of slavery, and slaveholders. As a general rule,

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poor white persons are regarded with less esteem and attention than negroes, and though the condition of the latter is wretched beyond description, vast numbers of the former are infinitely worse off. A cunningly devised mockery of freedom is guaranteed to them, and that is all. To all intents and purposes they are disfranchised, and outlawed, and the only privilege extended to them, is a shallow and circumscribed participation in the political movements that usher slaveholders into office.

We have not breathed away seven and twenty years in the South, without becoming acquainted with the demagogical manœuverings of the oligarchy. Their intrigues and tricks of legerdemain are as familiar to us as household words; in vain might the world be ransacked for a more precious junto of flatterers and cajolers. It is amusing to ignorance, amazing to credulity, and insulting to intelligence, to hear them in their blattering efforts to mystify and pervert the sacred principles of liberty, and turn the curse of slavery into a blessing. To the illiterate poor whites—made poor and ignorant by the system of slavery—they hold out the idea that slavery is the very bulwark of our liberties, and the foundation of American independence! For hours at a time, day after day, will they expatiate upon the inexpressible beauties and excellencies of this great, *free and independent* nation; and

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finally, with the most extravagant gesticulations and rhetorical flourishes, conclude their nonsensical ravings, by attributing all the glory and prosperity of the country, from Maine to Texas, and from Georgia to California, to the "invaluable institutions of the South!" With what patience we could command, we have frequently listened to the incoherent and truth-murdering declamations of these champions of slavery, and, in the absence of a more politic method of giving vent to our disgust and indignation, have involuntarily bit our lips into blisters.

The lords of the lash are not only absolute masters of the blacks, who are bought and sold, and driven about like so many cattle, but they are also the oracles and arbiters of all non-slaveholding whites, whose freedom is merely nominal, and whose unparalleled illiteracy and degradation is purposely and fiendishly perpetuated. How little the "poor white trash," the great majority of the Southern people, know of the real condition of the country is, indeed, sadly astonishing. The truth is, they know nothing of public measures, and little of private affairs, except what their imperious masters, the slave-drivers, condescend to tell, and that is but precious little, and even that little, always garbled and one-sided, is never told except in public harangues; for the haughty cavaliers of shackles and handcuffs will not degrade themselves by

Hinton R. Helper

holding private converse with those who have neither dimes nor hereditary rights in human flesh.

Whenever it pleases, and to the extent it pleases, a slaveholder to become communicative, poor whites may hear with fear and trembling, but not speak. They must be as mum as dumb brutes, and stand in awe of their august superiors, or be crushed with stern rebukes, cruel oppressions, or downright violence. If they dare to think for themselves, their thoughts must be forever concealed. The expression of any sentiment at all conflicting with the gospel of slavery, dooms them at once in the community in which they live, and then, whether willing or unwilling, they are obliged to become heroes, martyrs, or exiles. They may thirst for knowledge, but there is no Moses among them to smite it out of the rocks of Horeb. The black veil, through whose almost impenetrable meshes light seldom gleams, has long been pendent over their eyes, and there, with fiendish jealousy, the slave-driving ruffians sedulously guard it. Non-slaveholders are not only kept in ignorance of what is transpiring at the North, but they are continually misinformed of what is going on even in the South. Never were the poorer classes of a people, and those classes so largely in the majority, and all inhabiting the same country, so basely duped, so adroitly swindled, or so damnablely outraged.

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It is expected that the stupid and sequacious masses, the white victims of slavery, will believe, and, as a general thing, they do believe, whatever the slaveholders tell them; and thus it is that they are cajoled into the notion that they are the freest, happiest and most intelligent people in the world, and are taught to look with prejudice and disapprobation upon every new principle or progressive movement. Thus it is that the South, woefully inert and inventionless, has lagged behind the North, and is now weltering in the cesspool of ignorance and degradation. What we want and must have, as the only sure means of attaining to a position worthy of Sovereign States in this eminently progressive and utilitarian age, is an energetic, intelligent, enterprising, virtuous, and unshackled population; an untrammelled press, and the Freedom of Speech. For ourselves, as white people, and for the negroes and other persons of whatever color or condition, we demand all the rights, interests and prerogatives, that are guarantied to corresponding classes of mankind in the North, in England, in France, in Germany, or in any other civilized and enlightened country. Any proposition that may be offered conceding less than this demand, will be promptly and disdainfully rejected.

Hinton R. Helper, *Impending Crisis of the South* (N. Y., 1860), 42-163 *passim*.

Caleb Cushing

4. The West Is the Seat of Empire (1857)

By CALEB CUSHING

An interesting example of the interest of the Eastern man in the West.

AYE, the slave power,—jealousy of the political *power* assumed as the consequence of the possession of slaves by the South,—pursuit of *power* at the North by artful appeals to that jealousy,—such is the theme of the Republican candidate for the executive chair of the Commonwealth. Not the poor slave,—not the abolition of involuntary servitude as a moral wrong,—not the sufferings of the bondage-bred sons of Africa,—but the *power* of the white men of the Southern States. Mr. Banks does not indulge in visionary schemes of emancipation. Mr. Garrison, Mr. Phillips, or Mr. Sumner may plead for the liberty of the bond-man; but Mr. Banks pleads for power. So far is he from demanding the political equality of all races, that he spontaneously suggests, in his speech at Springfield, the disfranchisement of the Chinese in California, the application to them of the decision in the case of Dred Scott,—the Chinese, but a shade in color darker than ourselves,—the Chinese, a cultured and lettered race, the depositaries of the oldest and most tenacious of all the forms of human civilization. What! Shall

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not the disciple of Confucius and Mencius say, as well as the black savage of Africa,—Am not I a man, and a brother? Oh, no! he is to be trampled on, as of inferior cast to us, seeing that his condition, for better or worse, does not involve any question of *power* between the North and the South.

Jealousy of the South! Such would not be my theme, if the demon of sectional hate had so possessed itself of me. I should not strive to draw the attention of Massachusetts away from the only real danger, of a sectional nature, which threatens, and to fasten her attention to an imaginary one. Not by the comparatively small section of the Union, lying between Mason and Dixon's line and the Gulf of Mexico, is the sceptre of power in this Union to be held hereafter; but by those vast regions of the West, State after State stretching out, like star beyond star in the blue depths of the firmament, far away to the shores of the Pacific. What is the power of the old Thirteen, North or South, compared with that of the mighty West? There is the seat of empire, and there is the hand of imperial power. Tell me not of the perils of the slave power, and the encroachments of the South. Massachusetts and South Carolina will together be but as clay in the fingers of the potter, when the great West shall reach forth its arm of power, as ere long it will, to command the destinies of the Union. . . .

James Buchanan

Too long has that most doe-faced of all doe-facedness, a trembling compliance with some party passion of the hour, assumed injuriously to impute its own infirmity of temper to all those, who hold fast, in spite of discouragement, to independence and to truth, and who,—loving their country, and their whole country,—with Winthrop, prefer a united Nation to a united North; or with Choate, reverently follow the flag and keep step to the music of the Union. I say, there has been quite enough of this, as to persons, and it has got to stop. For we now have its consummation in the form, in which Mr. Banks puts it, of indiscriminate insult to the whole of New England.

Caleb Cushing, *Speech* (Boston, 1857), 23-25 *passim*.

5. Protection of Citizens of Mexico (1858)

By PRESIDENT JAMES BUCHANAN

From a president's message, relating to conditions which continued from 1848 to 1878.

OUR position in relation to the independent States south of us on this continent, and especially those within the limits of North America, is of a peculiar character. The northern boundary of Mexico is coincident with our own south-

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ern boundary from ocean to ocean, and we must necessarily feel a deep interest in all that concerns the well-being and the fate of so near a neighbor. We have always cherished the kindest wishes for the success of that Republic, and have indulged the hope that it might at last, after all its trials, enjoy peace and prosperity under a free and stable government. We have never hitherto interfered, directly or indirectly, with its internal affairs, and it is a duty which we owe to ourselves to protect the integrity of its territory against the hostile interference of any other power. Our geographical position, our direct interest in all that concerns Mexico, and our well-settled policy in regard to the North American continent render this an indispensable duty.

Mexico has been in a state of constant revolution almost ever since it achieved its independence. One military leader after another has usurped the Government in rapid succession, and the various constitutions from time to time adopted have been set at naught almost as soon as they were proclaimed. The successive Governments have afforded no adequate protection, either to Mexican citizens or foreign residents, against lawless violence. Heretofore a seizure of the capital by a military chieftain has been generally followed by at least the nominal submission of the country to his rule for a brief period, but not so at the present crisis of Mexican affairs.

James Buchanan

A civil war has been raging for some time throughout the Republic between the central Government at the City of Mexico, which has endeavored to subvert the constitution last framed by military power, and those who maintain the authority of that constitution. The antagonist parties each hold possession of different States of the Republic, and the fortunes of the war are constantly changing. Meanwhile the most reprehensible means have been employed by both parties to extort money from foreigners, as well as natives, to carry on this ruinous contest. The truth is that this fine country, blessed with a productive soil and a benign climate, has been reduced by civil dissension to a condition of almost hopeless anarchy and imbecility. It would be vain for this Government to attempt to enforce payment in money of the claims of American citizens, now amounting to more than \$10,000,000, against Mexico, because she is destitute of all pecuniary means to satisfy these demands. . . .

In various parts of the Republic instances have been numerous of the murder, imprisonment, and plunder of our citizens by different parties claiming and exercising a local jurisdiction; but the central Government; although repeatedly urged thereto, have made no effort either to punish the authors of these outrages or to prevent their recurrence. No American citizen can now visit Mexico on lawful business without imminent

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danger to his person and property. There is no adequate protection to either, and in this respect our treaty with that Republic is almost a dead letter. . . .

Abundant cause now undoubtedly exists for a resort to hostilities against the Government still holding possession of the capital. Should they succeed in subduing the constitutional forces, all reasonable hope will then have expired of a peaceful settlement of our difficulties.

On the other hand, should the constitutional party prevail and their authority be established over the Republic, there is reason to hope that they will be animated by a less unfriendly spirit and may grant that redress to American citizens which justice requires so far as they may possess the means. . . .

But there is another view of our relations with Mexico, arising from the unhappy condition of affairs along our southwestern frontier, which demands immediate action. In that remote region, where there are but few white inhabitants, large bands of hostile and predatory Indians roam promiscuously over the Mexican States of Chihuahua and Sonora and our adjoining Territories. The local governments of these States are perfectly helpless and are kept in a state of constant alarm by the Indians. They have not the power, if they possessed the will, even to restrain lawless Mexicans from passing the border and committing

Carl Schurz

depredations on our remote settlers. A state of anarchy and violence prevails throughout that distant frontier. The laws are a dead letter and life and property wholly insecure. . . . I can imagine no possible remedy for these evils and no mode of restoring law and order on that remote and unsettled frontier but for the Government of the United States to assume a temporary protectorate over the northern portions of Chihuahua and Sonora and to establish military posts within the same; and this I earnestly recommend to Congress. This protection may be withdrawn as soon as local governments shall be established in these Mexican States capable of performing their duties to the United States, restraining the lawless, and preserving peace along the border.

Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (Washington, 1899), V. 511-514 *passim*.

6. The Democracy of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates (1858)

By CARL SCHURZ

(See note above, p. 149.) Schurz heard the seven joint debates between Lincoln and Douglas as a newspaper reporter.

I WAS deeply impressed by the democratic character of the spectacle I had witnessed in Illinois. On the whole it had strengthened my

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faith in the virtue of the democratic principle, although it had also made me more sensible of some of the dangers attending its practical realization. Here were two men, neither of whom had enjoyed any of the advantages of superior breeding or education. One of them, Lincoln, had in fact risen from home conditions so wretched that a faithful description of them severely taxes our credulity—conditions ordinarily apt to clog the intellect and to impede the development of all finer moral sensibilities. Neither of the two men had received any regular schooling calculated in any manner to prepare a person for the career of a statesman. Neither of them had in any sense been particularly favored by fortune. Neither of them had, in working his way upward from the low estate, any resource to draw on but his own native ability and spirit. But here they were, in positions before the country in which their ambitions could, without any overleaping, aim at the highest honors of the Republic. One of them, Douglas, had risen by rapid but regular political advancement to a Senatorship of the United States, and had, by his contact with the great world, acquired, if not the true refinement, at least some of the outward polish of “good society.” His rise had been effected, perhaps, not altogether by blameless means, but at any rate mainly by the force of his own intellect and the exercise of his own energies. The other, Lincoln,

Carl Schurz

had not been quite so successful in achieving official station, but he had won a singular influence over the minds of large numbers of people by the power of his own mind and the virtues of his own character—and this while the outward rusticity of his early life still clung to him, and was in a large sense a part of his being. Each one of them was truly a child of the people. Each had won his remarkable eminence because each had, in his way, by his own effort, deserved it. And these men now contended for the mastery by appealing to the intelligence and the patriotism of the people—the one, perhaps, largely by the arts of the demagogue, seeking to befog the popular understanding where he could not, to his advantage, honestly enlighten it; the other, perhaps, by candid truth-telling and grave appeals to conscience—but both by addressing themselves to the minds of the people, whose opinion, lawfully expressed, was by both recognized to be the only legitimate source of all power.

Carl Schurz, *Reminiscences* (N. Y., 1907), II. 98-99.

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7. "A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand" (1858)

By ABRAHAM LINCOLN

From one of Lincoln's most famous speeches, which was accepted substantially by the Republican party as a platform.

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention:

If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it

Abraham Lincoln

forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

Have we no tendency to the latter condition?

Let any one who doubts carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination—piece of machinery, so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to do, and how well adapted; but also let him study the history of its construction and trace, if he can, or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidences of design and concert of action among its chief architects, from the beginner. . . . We cannot absolutely know that all these exact adaptations are the result of preconcert. But when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places and by different workmen,—Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James, for instance,—and we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortises exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places and not a piece too many or too few, not omitting even scaffolding—or, if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in—in such a case

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we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn up before the first blow was struck. . . .

Our cause, then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends—those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work, who do care for the result. Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now?—now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.

Abraham Lincoln, *Speeches and Debates* (N. Y., 1907), 35-46 *passim*.

Stephen A. Douglas

8. Declaration of Independence Not for Negroes (1858)

By SENATOR STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

From the joint debates. Douglas was not directly interested in slavery but he said that he did not care whether it was voted down or voted up.

IF I do not truly and honorably represent your feelings and principles, then I ought not to be your senator; and I will never conceal my opinions, or modify or change them a hair's breadth, in order to get votes. I tell you that this Chicago doctrine of Lincoln's—declaring that the negro and the white man are made equal by the Declaration of Independence and by Divine Providence—is a monstrous heresy. The signers of the Declaration of Independence never dreamed of the negro when they were writing that document. They referred to white men, to men of European birth and European descent, when they declared the equality of all men. I see a gentleman there in the crowd shaking his head. Let me remind him that when Thomas Jefferson wrote that document he was the owner, and so continued until his death, of a large number of slaves. Did he intend to say in that Declaration that his negro slaves, which he held and treated as property, were created his equals by divine law, and that he was violating the law of God every day of his

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life by holding them as slaves? It must be borne in mind that when that Declaration was put forth, every one of the thirteen colonies were slave-holding colonies, and every man who signed that instrument represented a slave-holding constituency. Recollect, also, that no one of them emancipated his slaves, much less put them on an equality with himself, after he signed the Declaration. On the contrary, they all continued to hold their negroes as slaves during the Revolutionary War. Now; do you believe—are you willing to have it said—that every man who signed the Declaration of Independence declared the negro his equal, and then was hypocrite enough to continue to hold him as a slave, in violation of what he believed to be the divine law? And yet when you say that the Declaration of Independence includes the negro, you charge the signers of it with hypocrisy. Mr. Lincoln, following the example and lead of all the little Abolition orators who go around and lecture in the basements of schools and churches, reads from the Declaration of Independence that men were created equal, and then asks how can you deprive a negro of that equality which God and the Declaration of Independence award to him? He and they maintain that negro equality is guaranteed by the laws of God, and that it is asserted in the Declaration of Independence. If they think so, of course they have a right to say so, and so vote. I do

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not question Mr. Lincoln's conscientious belief that the negro was made his equal, and hence is his brother; but for my own part, I do not regard the negro as my equal, and positively deny that he is my brother or any kin to me whatever. Lincoln has evidently learned by heart Parson Lovejoy's catechism. He can repeat it as well as Farnsworth, and he is worthy of a medal from Father Giddings and Fred Douglass for his Abolitionism. He holds that the negro was born his equal and yours, and that he was endowed with equality by the Almighty, and that no human law can deprive him of these rights which were guaranteed to him by the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Now, I do not believe that the Almighty ever intended the negro to be the equal of the white man. If he did, he has been a long time demonstrating the fact. For thousands of years the negro has been a race upon the earth, and during all that time, in all latitudes and climates, wherever he has wandered or been taken, he has been inferior to the race which he has there met. He belongs to an inferior race, and must always occupy an inferior position. I do not hold that because the negro is our inferior therefore he ought to be a slave. By no means can such a conclusion be drawn from what I have said.

Lincoln's *Speeches and Debates* (N. Y., 1907), 46-138 *passim*

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9. Meaning of the Declaration of Independence (1858-1859)

By ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Reply to the sentiments of the speech in the preceding extract.

IN those days, our Declaration of Independence was held sacred by all, and thought to include all; but now, to aid in making the bondage of the negro universal and eternal, it is assailed and sneered at, and construed and hawked at, and torn, till if its framers could rise from their graves they could not at all recognize it. All the powers of earth seem rapidly combining against him. Mammon is after him, ambition follows, philosophy follows, and the theology of the day is fast joining the cry. They have him in his prison house, they have searched his person and left no prying instrument with him. One after another they have closed the heavy iron doors upon him; and now they have him, as it were, bolted in with a lock of a hundred keys, which can never be unlocked without the concurrence of every key; the keys in the hands of a hundred different men, and they scattered to a hundred different and distant places; and they stand musing as to what invention, in all the dominions of mind and mat-

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ter, can be produced to make the impossibility of his escape more complete than it is. . . .

I think the authors of that notable instrument [Declaration of Independence] intended to include all men; but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal with “certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” This they said, and this they meant. . . . They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere. The assertion that “all men are created equal” was of no practical use in effecting our separation from Great Britain; and it was placed in the Declaration, not for that but for future use. Its authors meant it to be, as, thank God, it is now proving itself, a stumbling-block to all those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants, and they meant when such

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should reappear in this fair land and commence their vocation, they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack. . . .

It is now no child's play to save the principles of Jefferson from total overthrow in this nation. One would state with great confidence that he could convince any sane child that the simpler propositions of Euclid are true; but nevertheless he would fail, utterly, with one who should deny the definitions and axioms. The principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society. And yet they are denied and evaded, with no small show of success. One dashinglly calls them "glittering generalities." Another bluntly calls them "self-evident lies." And others insidiously argue that they apply only to "superior races." These expressions, differing in form, are identical in object and effect—the supplanting the principles of free government, and restoring those of classification, caste and legitimacy. They would delight a convocation of crowned heads plotting against the people. They are the vanguard—the miners and sappers of returning despotism. We must repulse them, or they will subjugate us. This is a world of compensation; and he who would be no slave must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, cannot long retain it. All honor to Jefferson—to the man who, in the concrete pres-

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sure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there that to-day and in all coming days it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling-block to the very harbingers of re-appearing tyranny and oppression.

Nicolay & Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (N. Y., 1890), II. 87-183 *passim*.

10. The Irrepressible Conflict of Freedom and Slavery (1858)

By WILLIAM H. SEWARD

A speech on much the same lines as Lincoln's, which, however, marked Seward as a radical and which probably prevented his nomination for the presidency.

THIS African slave system is one which, in its origin and in its growth, has been altogether foreign from the habits of the races which colonized these states and established civilization here. It was introduced on this continent as an engine of conquest, and for the establishment of monarchical power, by the Portuguese and the Spaniards, and was rapidly extended by them all over South America, Central America, Louisiana, and Mexico. Its legitimate fruits are seen in the poverty, imbecility, and anarchy which now per-

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vade all Portuguese and Spanish America. The free-labor system is of German extraction, and it was established in our country by emigrants from Sweden, Holland, Germany, Great Britain, and Ireland. We justly ascribe to its influences the strength, wealth, greatness, intelligence, and freedom, which the whole American people now enjoy. One of the chief elements of the value of human life is freedom in the pursuit of happiness. The slave system is not only intolerable, unjust, and inhuman, toward the laborer, whom, only because he is a laborer, it loads down with chains and converts into merchandise, but is scarcely less severe upon the freeman, to whom, only because he is a laborer from necessity, it denies facilities for employment, and whom it expels from the community because it cannot enslave and convert into merchandise also. It is necessarily improvident and ruinous, because, as a general truth, communities prosper and flourish, or droop and decline, in just the degree that they practise or neglect to practise the primary duties of justice and humanity. The free-labor system conforms to the divine law of equality, which is written in the hearts and consciences of men, and therefore is always and everywhere beneficent.

The slave system is one of constant danger, distrust, suspicion, and watchfulness. It debases those whose toil alone can produce wealth and

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resources for defence, to the lowest degree of which human nature is capable to guard against mutiny and insurrection, and thus wastes energies which otherwise might be employed in national development and aggrandizement.

The free-labor system educates all alike, and by opening all the fields of industrial employment and all the departments of authority, to the unchecked and equal rivalry of all classes of men, at once secures universal contentment, and brings into the highest possible activity all the physical, moral, and social energies of the whole state. In states where the slave system prevails, the masters, directly or indirectly, secure all political power, and constitute a ruling aristocracy. In states where the free-labor system prevails, universal suffrage necessarily obtains, and the state inevitably becomes, sooner or later, a republic or democracy. . . .

Hitherto the two systems have existed in different states, but side by side within the American Union. This has happened because the Union is a confederation of states. But in another aspect the United States constitute only one nation. Increase of population, which is filling the states out to their very borders, together with a new and extended net work of railroads and other avenues, and an internal commerce which daily becomes more intimate, is rapidly bringing the states into a higher and more per-

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fect social unity or consolidation. Thus, these antagonistic systems are continually coming into closer contact, and collision results.

Shall I tell you what this collision means? They who think that it is accidental, unnecessary, the work of interested or fanatical agitators, and therefore ephemeral, mistake the case altogether. It is *an irrepressible conflict* between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slave-holding nation or entirely a free labor nation. Either the cotton- and rice-fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately be tilled by free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts of legitimate merchandise alone, or else the rye-fields and wheat-fields of Massachusetts and New York must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves, and Boston and New York become once more markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men. It is the failure to apprehend this great truth that induces so many unsuccessful attempts at final compromises between the slave and free states, and it is the existence of this great fact that renders all such pretended compromises, when made, vain and ephemeral. . . .

At last, the Republican party has appeared. It avows, now, as the Republican party of 1800

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did, in one word, its faith and its works, "Equal and exact justice to all men." Even when it first entered the field, only half organized, it struck a blow which only just failed to secure complete and triumphant victory. In this, its second campaign, it has already won advantages which render that triumph now both easy and certain.

The secret if its assured success lies in that very characteristic which, in the mouth of scoffers, constitutes its great and lasting imbecility and reproach. It lies in the fact that it is a party of one idea; but that is a noble one—an idea that fills and expands all generous souls; the idea of equality—the equality of all men before human tribunals and human laws, as they all are equal before the Divine tribunal and Divine laws.

I know, and you know, that a revolution has begun. I know, and all the world knows, that revolutions never go backward. Twenty Senators and a hundred Representatives proclaim boldly in Congress to-day sentiments and opinions and principles of freedom which hardly so many men, even in this free state, dared to utter in their own homes twenty years ago. While the Government of the United States, under the conduct of the Democratic party, has been all that time surrendering one plain and castle after another to slavery, the people of the United States have been no less steadily and perseveringly gathering together the forces with which to re-

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cover back again all the fields and all the castles which have been lost, and to confound and overthrow, by one decisive blow, the betrayers of the Constitution and freedom forever.

William H. Seward, *The Irrepressible Conflict: A Speech delivered at Rochester, October 25, 1858* (no title-page, New York, 1858), 1-7 *passim*.

II. Appeal to the Farmer (1858)

By HORACE GREELEY

For many years editor of the New York "Tribune," which had a great circulation among farmers.

I PLACE at the head of all, the need of an adequate conception by farmers of the nature and the worth of their vocation. In taking this position, I put aside as impertinent, or trivial, or chaffy, all mere windy talk of the dignity, honor, and happiness of the farmer's calling. When I hear any one dilate in this vein, I want to look him square in the eye and ask, "Sir, do you know a farmer who acts and lives as though he believed one word of this? Do you know one who chooses the brightest, ablest, best instructed among his four or five sons, and says to him, 'Let the rest do as they please, I want you to succeed me in the old homestead, and be the best farmer in the country?'" Do you know one who really believes that his son who is to be a farmer

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requires as liberal and as thorough an education as his brothers who are to be respectively lawyer, doctor, or divine? Do you know one who is to-day personally tilling the soil, who, if he were enabled to choose for his only and darling son just what career he preferred above all others, would make him a farmer? If you do know such a farmer—and I confess *I* do not—then I say you know one who will not be offended at anything I shall say implying that agriculture is not now the liberal and liberalizing vocation it should and yet must be. Whenever the great mass of our farmers shall have come fully to realize that there is scope and reward in their own pursuit for all the knowledge and all the wisdom with which their sons can be imbued—rare geniuses as we know many of them are—then we shall have achieved the first great step toward making agriculture that first of vocations which it rightfully should be. But to-day it is the current though unavowed belief of the majority—and of farmers even more than of others—that any education is good enough for a husbandman, and that any blockhead who knows enough to come in when it rains is qualified to manage a farm.

The need of our agriculture next in order is a correction of the common error, that farming is an affair of muscle only; and that the best farmer is he who delves and grubs from daylight to dark, and from the first of January to the last of De-

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cember. You will not, I am sure, interpret me as undervaluing industry, diligence, force; certainly, you will not believe me to commend that style of farming which leaves time for loitering away sunny hours in bar-rooms, and for attending every auction, horse-race, shooting-match, or monkey show that may infest the township. I know right well that he who would succeed in any pursuit must carefully husband his time, making every hour count. What I maintain is, that, while every hour has its duties, they are not all muscular; and that the farmer who would wisely and surely thrive must have time for mental improvement as well as for physical exertion. I know there are farmers who decline to take regularly any newspaper, even one devoted to agriculture, because they say they can't afford it, or have no time to read it. I say no farmer can afford to do without one. To attempt it is a blunder and a loss; if he has children growing up around him, it is moreover a grievous wrong. If every hard-working farmer, who says he cannot read in summer, because it is a hurrying season, were to set apart two hours of each day for reading and reflection, he would not only be a wiser and happier man than if he gave every hour to mere labor,—he would live in greater comfort and acquire more property. To dig is easily learned; but to learn how, where and when to dig most effectively is the achievement of a lifetime. There is no

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greater and yet no more common mistake than that which confounds incessant, exhausting muscular effort with the highest efficiency in farming. I know men who have toiled early and late, summer and winter, with resolute energy and ample strength, through their forty years of manhood, yet failed to secure a competence, not because they have been specially unfortunate, as they are apt to suppose, but because they lacked the knowledge and skill, the wisdom and science, that would have enabled them to make their exertions tell most effectively. They have been life-long workers; but they have not known how to work to the greatest advantage. Each of them has planted and sowed enough to shield him from want for the remainder of his days; but when the time came for reaping and gathering into barns, his crops were deficient. One year, too much rain; the next year, too little; now an untimely frost, and then the ravage of insects, have baffled his exertions and blasted his hopes, and left him in the down-hill of life still toiling for a hand-to-mouth subsistence. I think the observation of almost any of you will have furnished parallels in this respect for my own.

Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature* (N. Y., 1889), VII. 89-91.

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12. Mudsill Theory of Labor (1859)

By ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A reply to the doctrine that in every community there must be ignorant laborers at the bottom of the social scale for the benefit of those above them.

THE world is agreed that labor is the source from which human wants are mainly supplied. There is no dispute upon this point. From this point, however, men immediately diverge. Much disputation is maintained as to the best way of applying and controlling the labor element. By some it is assumed that labor is available only in connection with capital—that nobody labors, unless somebody else owning capital, somehow, by the use of it, induces him to do it. Having assumed this, they proceed to consider whether it is best that capital shall hire laborers, and thus induce them to work by their own consent, or buy them, and drive them to it, without their consent. Having proceeded so far, they naturally conclude that all laborers are naturally either hired laborers or slaves. They further assume that whoever is once a hired laborer, is fatally fixed in that condition for life; and thence again, that this condition is as bad as, or worse than, that of a slave. This is the “mud-sill” theory. But another class of reasoners hold the opinion that

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there is no such relation between capital and labor as assumed; that there is no such thing as a free man being fatally fixed for life in the condition of a hired laborer; that both these assumptions are false, and all inferences from them groundless. They hold that labor is prior to, and independent of, capital; that, in fact, capital is the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed; that labor can exist without capital, but that capital could never have existed without labor. Hence they hold that labor is the superior—greatly the superior—of capital.

They do not deny that there is, and probably always will be, a relation between labor and capital. The error, as they hold, is in assuming that the whole labor of the world exists within that relation. A few men own capital; and that few avoid labor themselves, and with their capital hire or buy another few to labor for them. A large majority belong to neither class—neither work for others, nor having others working for them. Even in all our slave States except South Carolina, a majority of the whole people of all colors are neither slaves nor masters. In these free States, a large majority are neither hirers nor hired. Men, with their families—wives, sons, and daughters—work for themselves, on their farms, in their houses, and in their shops, taking the whole product to themselves, and asking no fa-

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vors of capital on the one hand, nor of hirelings or slaves on the other. It is not forgotten that a considerable number of persons mingle their own labor with capital—that is, labor with their own hands, and also buy slaves or hire free men to labor for them; but this is only a mixed, and not a distinct, class. No principle stated is disturbed by the existence of this mixed class. Again, as has already been said, the opponents of the “mud-sill” theory insist that there is not, of necessity, any such thing as the free hired laborer being fixed to that condition of life. There is demonstration for saying this. Many independent men in this assembly doubtless a few years ago were hired laborers. And their case is almost, if not quite, the general rule.

The prudent, penniless beginner in the world labors for wages awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself, then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help him. This, say its advocates, is free labor—the just, and generous, and prosperous system, which opens the way for all, gives hope to all, and energy, and progress, and improvement of condition to all. If any continue through life in the condition of the hired laborer, it is not the fault of the system, but because of either a dependent nature which prefers it, or improvidence, folly, or singular misfortune. I have said this much about the

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elements of labor generally, as introductory to the consideration of a new phase which that element is in process of assuming. The old general rule was that educated people did not perform manual labor. They managed to eat their bread, leaving the toil of producing it to the uneducated. This was not an insupportable evil to the working bees, so long as the class of drones remained very small. But now, especially in these free States, nearly all are educated—quite too nearly all to leave the labor of the uneducated in any wise adequate to the support of the whole. It follows from this that henceforth educated people must labor. Otherwise, education itself would become a positive and intolerable evil. No country can sustain in idleness more than a small percentage of its numbers. The great majority must labor at something productive. From these premises the problem springs, "How can labor and education be the most satisfactorily combined?"

By the "mud-sill" theory it is assumed that labor and education are incompatible, and any practical combination of them impossible. According to that theory, a blind horse upon a tread-mill is a perfect illustration of what a laborer should be—all the better for being blind, that he could not kick understandingly. According to that theory, the education of laborers is not only useless but pernicious and dangerous. In fact, it is, in some sort, deemed a misfortune

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that laborers should have heads at all. Those same heads are regarded as explosive materials, only to be safely kept in damp places, as far as possible from that peculiar sort of fire which ignites them. A Yankee who could invent a strong-handed man without a head would receive the everlasting gratitude of the "mud-sill" advocates.

But free labor says, "No." Free labor argues that as the Author of man makes every individual with one head and one pair of hands, it was probably intended that heads and hands should coöperate as friends, and that that particular head should direct and control that pair of hands. As each man has one mouth to be fed, and one pair of hands to furnish food, it was probably intended that that particular pair of hands should feed that particular mouth—that each head is the natural guardian, director, and protector of the hands and mouth inseparably connected with it; and that being so, every head should be cultivated and improved by whatever will add to its capacity for performing its charge. In one word, free labor insists on universal education.

Abraham Lincoln, *Speeches and Debates*, (N. Y., 1907), 286-290.

John Brown

13. Last Speech of a Convicted Abolitionist (1859)

By JOHN BROWN

Concerned in outrages and murders in Kansas; and failed in an attempt to raise a slave insurrection in Virginia. His assertion that he was doing the Lord's work went far to convince the South that the anti-slavery man could not be trusted.

I HAVE, may it please the Court, a few words to say.

In the first place, I deny every thing but what I have all along admitted—the design on my part to free the slaves. I intended certainly to have made a clear thing of that matter, as I did last winter, when I went into Missouri, and there took slaves without the snapping of a gun on either side, moved them through the country, and finally left them in Canada. I designed to have done the same thing again, on a larger scale. That was all I intended. I never did intend murder, or treason, or the destruction of property, or to excite or incite slaves to rebellion, or to make insurrection.

I have another objection: and that is, it is unjust that I should suffer such a penalty. Had I interfered in the manner which I admit, and which I admit has been fairly proved,—(for I admire the truthfulness and candor of the greater portion of the witnesses who have testified in this

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case)—had I so interfered in behalf of the rich, the powerful, the intelligent, the so-called great, or in behalf of any of their friends, either father, mother, brother, sister, wife, or children, or any of that class, and suffered and sacrificed what I have in this interference, it would have been all right, and every man in this Court would have deemed it an act worthy of reward rather than punishment.

This Court acknowledges, as I suppose, the validity of the Law of God. I see a book kissed here which I suppose to be the Bible, or at least, the New Testament. That teaches me that all things “whatsoever I would that men should do unto me I should do even so to them.” It teaches me further, to “remember them that are in bonds as bound with them.” I endeavored to act up to that instruction. I say, I am yet too young to understand that God is any respecter of persons. I believe that to have interfered as I have done, as I have always freely admitted I have done, in behalf of His despised poor, was not wrong, but right. Now, if it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children, and with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments—I submit: so let it be done.

Let me say one word further:

John Brown

I feel entirely satisfied with the treatment I have received on my trial. Considering the circumstances, it has been more generous than I expected. But I feel no consciousness of guilt. I have stated from the first what was my intention and what was not. I never had any design against the life of any person, nor any disposition to commit treason, or excite slaves to rebel, or make any general insurrection. I never encouraged any man to do so, but always discouraged any idea of that kind.

Let me say, also, a word in regard to the statements made by some of those connected with me. I hear it has been stated by some of them that I have induced them to join me. But the contrary is true. I do not say this to injure them, but as regretting their weakness. There is not one of them but joined me of his own accord, and the greater part at their own expense. A number of them I never saw, and never had a word or conversation with, till the day they came to me, and that was for the purpose I have stated.

Now I have done.

James Redpath, *The Public Life of Capt. John Brown* (Boston, 1860), 340-342.

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14. America the Lodestar of Liberty (1859)

By CARL SCHURZ

(See note above, p. 149.)

I, BORN in a foreign land, pay my tribute to Americanism? Yes, for to me the word Americanism, *true* Americanism, comprehends the noblest ideas which ever swelled a human heart with noble pride.

It is one of the earliest recollections of my boyhood, that one summer night our whole village was stirred up by an uncommon occurrence. I say our village, for I was born not far from that beautiful spot where the Rhine rolls its green waters out of the wonderful gate of the Seven Mountains, and then meanders with majestic tranquillity through one of the most glorious valleys of the world. That night our neighbors were pressing around a few wagons covered with linen sheets and loaded with household utensils and boxes and trunks to their utmost capacity. One of our neighboring families was moving far away across a great water, and it was said that they would never again return. And I saw silent tears trickling down weather-beaten cheeks, and the hands of rough peasants firmly pressing each other, and some of the men and women hardly able to speak when they nodded

Carl Schurz

to one another a last farewell. At last the train started into motion, they gave three cheers for *America*, and then in the first gray dawn of the morning I saw them wending their way over the hill until they disappeared in the shadow of the forest. And I heard many a man say, how happy he would be if he could go with them to that great and free country, where a man could be himself.

That was the first time that I heard of America, and my childish imagination took possession of a land covered partly with majestic trees, partly with flowery prairies, immeasurable to the eye, and intersected with large rivers and broad lakes—a land where everybody could do what he thought best, and where nobody need be poor, because everybody was free.

And later, when I was old enough to read, and descriptions of this country and books of American history fell into my hands, the offspring of my imagination acquired the colors of reality, and I began to exercise my brain with the thought of what man might be and become when left perfectly free to himself. And still later, when ripening into manhood, I looked up from my school-books into the stir and bustle of the world, and the trumpet-tones of struggling humanity struck my ear and thrilled my heart, and I saw my nation shake her chains in order to burst them, and I heard a gigantic, universal shout for Liberty rising up to the skies; and at last, after

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having struggled manfully and drenched the earth of Fatherland with the blood of thousands of noble beings, I saw that nation crushed down again, not only by over-whelming armies, but by the dead weight of customs and institutions and notions and prejudices which past centuries had heaped upon them, and which a moment of enthusiasm, however sublime, could not destroy; then I consoled an almost despondent heart with the idea of a youthful people and of original institutions clearing the way for an untrammelled development of the ideal nature of man. Then I turned my eyes instinctively across the Atlantic Ocean, and America and Americanism, as I fancied them, appeared to me as the last depositories of the hopes of all true friends of humanity.

Carl Schurz, *Writings* (N. Y., etc., 1913), I. 49-50.

15. Doctrine of Filibustering (1860)

By JOHN F. H. CLAIBORNE

An argument for the right of the United States to break up the government of its neighbors indirectly.

THE right of revolution belongs to the people; they never resort to it but when oppression becomes intolerable, and then the law of nations, founded on humanity and justice, makes it lawful to assist the oppressed. . . .

John F. H. Claiborne

We are a free people; and we should express our sympathy for the oppressed, and assume, in this hemisphere, the attitude of control that becomes a republic.

Shall we "hide our light under a bushel" instead of diffusing its radiance over benighted nations? Shall we waste the "talent" committed to our care? Must we not "love our neighbor as ourself," and extend to him the blessings we enjoy? Are not nations the instruments of Providence? Have they a mission? What higher commission can we have than to resist the introduction of foreign influence and systems on this continent, and extend and establish our own? Had this been boldly executed when our standard was planted on the Capitol of Mexico, or when Cuba implored our assistance, we should have acquitted ourselves of a great debt incurred by our fathers when they accepted assistance; and this great republic, instead of exhausting its energies over its own dissensions would now stand before the world united and impregnable.

We proceed upon the theory that the condition of a republic is repose. What an error! That is the normal condition of absolutism. The law of a republic is progress. Its nature is aggressive. It is founded on the conflagration of ancient and polluted things, and it must have play and action on surrounding nations, or, like Saturn, devour its own offspring.

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Kossuth's idea of the "solidarity" or unity of nations, is neither historical or practical. Nor, if practical, would such a condition be desirable. Even a united church would cease to be evangelical and become corrupt. Our true policy is entire isolation as to our own sovereignty, and a fearless and controlling exercise of power over contiguous governments. We are deficient, as yet, in nationality. War is not to be dreaded when it develops this sentiment. Make the republic as national as some of the older countries of Europe, and it would have little to fear from its enemies. Nationality alone has arrested the march of the conqueror, when all other efforts had failed. When associated with republican institutions the moral force of a nation is invincible. The ancient republic enacted prodigies. Their soldiers fought not for their own glory, but for the glory of Greece and Rome. "I am a Roman citizen," was the proudest boast of antiquity. Venice, in her era of independence, flaunted her flag over two continents. The Dutch republic wielded the trident of the seas. The commonwealth of England domineered over Europe. The French republic shook the dynasties of a thousand years.

What, then, is there to dread, so long as we are true to ourselves, if we see fit to extend the power and the principles of the republic? Other governments may feebly object, and their objections can be satisfactorily answered. Should they

John F. H. Claiborne

prefer war, what would be its effect but to develop our internal resources, and consolidate American nationality? In a struggle of ten years, with due allowance for the vicissitudes of war, we should become richer and more powerful, while they would stagger under the burden of their own debts.

What have we to fear, that we should truckle to all the world, and quarrel for their amusement, instead of pursuing our natural instinct for expansion? Why shut our ears to the appeals of humanity and stifle a sympathy we inherited with our blood? Boldly administered, the republic is invincible. Our commerce, our mighty rivers and lakes, our mountains and prairies, are the nurses of enterprise. We occupy a country, not, like the tropics, producing food without labor, and therefore redundant and effeminate population, nor, like the arctic regions, supporting a sparse and apathetic people, ice-bound as their climate, and incapable of emotion, but a latitude where labor is essential to production, and production is the sure reward of labor; where the faculties are neither emasculated or deadened by the extremes of temperature; where the physical conditions of nurture, diet, education, and the institutions of government are all most favorable to development and power. . . .

J. F. H. Claiborne, *Life and Correspondence of J. A. Quitman* (N. Y., 1860), II. 107-113 *passim*.

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16. Young America an Old Fogy (1860)

By ABRAHAM LINCOLN

On discoveries, inventions, and improvements.

WE have all heard of Young America. He is the most current youth of the age. Some think him conceited and arrogant; but has he not reason to entertain a rather extensive opinion of himself? Is he not the inventor and owner of the present, and sole hope of the future? Men and things, everywhere, are ministering unto him. Look at his apparel, and you shall see cotton fabrics from Manchester and Lowell; flax linen from Ireland; wool cloth from Spain; silk from France; furs from the Arctic region; with a buffalo-robe from the Rocky Mountains, as a general outsider. At his table, besides plain bread and meat made at home, are sugar from Louisiana, coffee and fruits from the tropics, salt from Turk's Island, fish from Newfoundland, tea from China, and spices from the Indies. The whale of the Pacific furnishes his candlelight, he has a diamond ring from Brazil, a gold watch from California, and a Spanish cigar from Havana. He not only has a present supply of all these, and much more; but thousands of hands are engaged in producing fresh supplies, and other thousands in bringing them to him. The

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iron horse is panting and impatient to carry him everywhere in no time; and the lightning stands ready harnessed to take and bring his tidings in a trifle less than no time. He owns a large part of the world, by right of possessing it, and all the rest by right of wanting it, and intending to have it. As Plato had for the immortality of the soul, so Young America has "a pleasing hope, a fond desire—a longing after" territory. He has a great passion—a perfect rage—for the "new"; particularly new men for office, and the new earth mentioned in the Revelations, in which being no more sea, there must be about three times as much land as in the present. He is a great friend of humanity; and his desire for land is not selfish, but merely an impulse to extend the area of freedom. He is very anxious to fight for the liberation of enslaved nations and colonies, provided, always, they have land, and have not any liking for his interference. As to those who have no land, and would be glad of help from any quarter, he considers they can afford to wait a few hundred years longer. In knowledge he is particularly rich. He knows all that can possibly be known; inclines to believe in spiritual rappings, and is the unquestioned inventor of "Manifest Destiny." His horror is for all that is old, particularly "Old Fogy"; and if there be anything old which he can endure, it is only old whisky and old tobacco. The great dif-

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ference between Young America and Old Fogy is the result of discoveries, inventions, and improvements. These, in turn, are the result of observation, reflection, and experiment. For instance, it is quite certain that ever since water has been boiled in covered vessels, men have seen the lids of the vessels rise and fall a little, with a sort of fluttering motion, by force of the steam; but so long as this was not specially observed, and reflected, and experimented upon, it came to nothing. At length, however, after many thousand years, some man observes this long-known effect of hot water lifting a pot-lid, and begins a train of reflection upon it. He says, "Why, to be sure, the force that lifts the pot-lid will lift anything else which is no heavier than the pot-lid. And as man has much hard fighting to do, cannot this hot-water power be made to help him?" He has become a little excited on the subject, and he fancies he hears a voice answering, "Try me." He does try it; and the observation, reflection, and trial give to the world the control of that tremendous and now well-known agent called steam-power. This is not the actual history in detail, but the general principle.

But was this **first** inventor of the application of steam wiser **or more** ingenious than those who had gone before **him**? Not at all. Had he not learned much of those, he never would have succeeded, probably never would have thought of

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making the attempt. To be fruitful in invention, it is indispensable to have a habit of observation and reflection; and this habit our steam friend acquired, no doubt, from those who, to him, were old fogies. But for the difference in habit of observation, why did Yankees almost instantly discover gold in California, which had been trodden upon and overlooked by Indians and Mexican greasers for centuries? Gold-mines are not the only mines overlooked in the same way. There are more mines above the earth's surface than below it. All nature—the whole world, material, moral, and intellectual—is a mine; and in Adam's day it was a wholly unexplored mine. Now, it was the destined work of Adam's race to develop, by discoveries, inventions, and improvements, the hidden treasures of this mine. But Adam had nothing to turn his attention to the work. If he should do anything in the way of inventions, he had first to invent the art of invention, the instance, at least, if not the habit, of observation and reflection. As might be expected, he seems not to have been a very observing man at first; for it appears he went about naked a considerable length of time before he ever noticed that obvious fact. But when he did observe it, the observation was not lost upon him; for it immediately led to the first of all inventions of which we have any direct account—the fig-leaf apron. Discoveries, inventions, and improvements followed rapidly,

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and have been increasing their rapidity ever since. The effects could not come all at once. It required time to bring them out, and they are still coming. The capacity to read could not be multiplied as fast as the means of reading. Spelling-books just began to go into the hands of the children, but the teachers were not very numerous or very competent, so that it is safe to infer they did not advance so speedily as they do nowadays. It is very probable—almost certain—that the great mass of men at that time were utterly unconscious that their condition or their minds were capable of improvements. They not only looked upon the educated few as superior beings, but they supposed themselves to be naturally incapable of rising to equality. To emancipate the mind from this false underestimate of itself is the great task which printing came into the world to perform. It is difficult for us now and here to conceive how strong this slavery of the mind was, and how long it did of necessity take to break its shackles, and to get a habit of freedom of thought established. It is, in this connection, a curious fact that a new country is most favorable—almost necessary—to the emancipation of thought, and the consequent advancement of civilization and the arts. The human family originated, as is thought, somewhere in Asia, and have worked their way principally westward. Just now in civilization and the arts the people of

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Asia are entirely behind those of Europe; those of the east of Europe behind those of the west of it; while we, here, in America, think we discover, and invent, and improve faster than any of them. They may think this is arrogance; but they cannot deny that Russia has called on us to show her, how to build steamboats and railroads, while in the older parts of Asia they scarcely know that such things as steamboats and railroads exist. In anciently inhabited countries, the dust of ages—a real, downright old-fogyism—seems to settle upon and smother the intellect and energies of man. It is in this view that I have mentioned the discovery of America as an event greatly favoring and facilitating useful discoveries and inventions. Next came the patent laws. These began in England in 1624, and in this country with the adoption of our Constitution. Before then any man [*might*] instantly use what another man had invented, so that the inventor had no special advantage from his invention. The patent system changed this, secured to the inventor for a limited time exclusive use of his inventions, and thereby added the fuel of interest to the fire of genius in the discovery and production of new and useful things.

Abraham Lincoln, *Presidential Speeches* (N. Y., 1907), 2-17 *passim*.

17. The True Popular Sovereignty (1860)

By SENATOR CHARLES SUMNER

(See note above, p. 70)

ALL hail to Popular Sovereignty in its true glory! This is the grand principle, first announced in the Declaration of Independence, which is destined to regenerate the world. It is embodied in those famous words, adopted by the Republican Convention at Chicago, that among the unalienable rights of all men are "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," and that "to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, *deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.*" These are sacred words, full of life-giving energy. Not simply national independence was here proclaimed, but also the primal rights of all mankind. Then and there appeared the Angel of Human Liberation, speaking and acting at once with heaven-born strength,—breaking bolts, unloosing bonds, and opening prison-doors,—always ranging on its mighty errand, wherever there are any, no matter of what country or race, who struggle for rights denied,—now cheering Garibaldi at Naples as it had cheered Washington in the snows of Valley Forge,—and especially visiting all who are down-trodden,

Charles Sumner

whispering that there is none so poor as to be without rights which every man is bound to respect.

But the great Declaration, not content with announcing certain rights as unalienable, and therefore beyond the control of any government, still further, restrains the sovereignty, which it asserts, by simply declaring that the United States have "full power to do all acts and things which independent states may OF RIGHT do." Here is a well-defined limitation upon Popular Sovereignty. The dogma of Tory lawyer and pamphleteers—put forward to sustain the claim of Parliamentary omnipotence, and vehemently espoused by Dr. Johnson in his "Taxation no Tyranny"—was, openly, that *sovereignty* is in its nature *illimitable*, precisely as is now loosely professed by Mr. Douglas for his handful of squatters. But this dogma is distinctly discarded in the Declaration, and it is frankly proclaimed that all *sovereignty* is subordinate to the rule of *Right*. Mark, now, the difference. All existing governments at that time, even the local governments of the Colonies, stood on *Power*, without limitation. Here was a new government, which, taking its place among the nations, announced that it stood only on *Right* and claimed no sovereignty inconsistent with *Right*. Such, again, is the Popular Sovereignty of the Declaration of Independence.

Charles Sumner, *Works* (Boston, 1874), V. 251 252.

CHAPTER XXIX—UNION OR SECESSION? (1860-1861)

In 1860 the question whether slavery was right or wrong, and the question whether the Federal Government had or had not a right to take action which would limit and eventually destroy slavery, were both merged in a more direct political question. Had the slaveholding part of the Union a right to secede, and thus to free itself from the constricting power of antislavery? On one side this discussion goes back to the old idea of nullification, and is founded upon the inquiry whether the States are sovereign, or the Union is sovereign. A second question was whether the sufferings of the South under the conditions of the previous ten years were such as would morally justify secession. Both these points are brought out in extracts below from the leaders in the controversy, such as Jefferson Davis, Toombs, and Stephens, on the Southern side, and Lincoln and Wade on the Northern side. The Southern arguments bring out clearly the fact that the main Southern motive was not the constitutionality of secession nor its moral right, but the future safety of slavery. Both sides appealed to patriotic sentiment, the South to its own people and sympathizers in the North; the Northern speakers to both North and South. When the crisis of secession actually came, both sides urged the people at large to support what each side thought a patriotic movement.



After the portrait by Healy in the Tennessee Historical Society at Nashville.

I. No Right of Secession (1860)

By PRESIDENT JAMES BUCHANAN

(See note above, p. 213.) The president's theory that there ought to be no secession, which he followed up by the assertion that he could do nothing to prevent it.

IN order to justify secession as a constitutional remedy, it must be on the principle that the Federal Government is a mere voluntary association of States, to be dissolved at pleasure by any one of the contracting parties. If this be so, the Confederacy is a rope of sand, to be penetrated and dissolved by the first adverse wave of public opinion in any of the States. In this manner our thirty-three States may resolve themselves into as many petty, jarring, and hostile republics, each one retiring from the Union without responsibility whenever any sudden excitement might impel them to such a course. By this process a Union might be entirely broken into fragments in a few weeks which cost our forefathers many years of toil, privation, and blood to establish.

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Such a principle is wholly inconsistent with the history as well as the character of the Federal Constitution. . . .

It is not pretended that any clause in the Constitution gives countenance to such a theory. It is altogether founded upon inference; not from any language contained in the instrument itself, but from the sovereign character of the several States by which it was ratified. But is it beyond the power of a State, like an individual, to yield a portion of its sovereign rights to secure the remainder? . . .

But that the Union was designed to be perpetual appears conclusively from the nature and extent of the powers conferred by the Constitution on the Federal Government. These powers embrace the very highest attributes of national sovereignty. They place both the sword and the purse under its control. . . .

To the extent of the delegated powers the Constitution of the United States is as much a part of the constitution of each State and is as binding upon its people as though it had been textually inserted therein.

This Government, therefore, is a great and powerful Government, invested with all the attributes of sovereignty over the special subjects to which its authority extends. Its framers never intended to implant in its bosom the seeds of its own destruction, nor were they at its creation

John J. Crittenden

guilty of the absurdity of providing for its own dissolution. It was not intended by its framers to be the baseless fabric of a vision, which at the touch of the enchanter would vanish into thin air, but a substantial and mighty fabric, capable of resisting the slow decay of time and of defying the storms of ages. Indeed, well may the jealous patriots of that day have indulged fears that a Government of such high powers might violate the reserved rights of the States, and wisely did they adopt the rule of a strict construction of these powers to prevent the danger. But they did not fear, nor had they any reason to imagine, that the Constitution would ever be so interpreted as to enable any State by her own act, and without the consent of her sister States, to discharge her people from all or any of their federal obligations.

Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (Washington, 1899), V. 630-634 *passim*.

2. Make a Sacrifice for the Union (1860)

By SENATOR JOHN J. CRITTENDEN

(See note above, p. 57.) A strong appeal for compromise.

YOU get a price, and the dearest price, for all the concession asked to be made,—you have the firmer establishment of your Union; you have

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the restoration of peace and tranquillity, and the hopes of a mighty future, all secured by this concession. How dearly must one individual, or two individuals, or many individuals, value their private opinions if they think them more important to the world than this mighty interest of the Union and government of the United States!

Sir, it is a cheap sacrifice. It is a glorious sacrifice. This Union cost a great deal to establish it; it cost the yielding of much of public opinion and much of policy, besides the direct or indirect cost of it in all the war to establish the independence of this country. When it was done, General Washington himself said, "Providence has helped us, or we could not have accomplished this thing." And this gift of our wisest men; this great work of their hands; this work in the foundation and the structure of which Providence Himself, with his benignant hand helped,—are we to give it all up for such small considerations? . . .

Sir, I wish to God it was in my power to preserve this Union by renouncing or agreeing to give up every conscientious and other opinion. I might not be able to discard it from my mind. I am under no obligation to do that. I may retain the opinion; but if I can do so great a good as to preserve my country, and give it peace, and its institutions and its Union stability, I will forego any action upon my opinions. Well now,

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my friends [addressing the Republican senators], that is all that is asked of you. Consider it well, and I do not distrust the result. As to the rest of this body, the gentlemen from the South, I would say to them, Can you ask more than this? Are you bent on revolution, bent on disunion? God forbid it. I cannot believe that such madness possesses the American people. This gives reasonable satisfaction. I can speak with confidence only of my own State. Old Kentucky will be satisfied with it, and she will stand by the Union and die by the Union if this satisfaction be given. Nothing shall seduce her. The clamor of no revolution, the seductions and temptations of no revolution, will tempt her to move one step. She has stood always by the side of the Constitution; she has always been devoted to it, and is this day. Give her this satisfaction, and I believe all the States of the South that are not desirous of disunion as a better thing than the Union and the Constitution, will be satisfied and will adhere to the Union, and we shall go on again in our great career of national prosperity and national glory.

But, sir, it is not necessary for me to speak to you of the consequences that will follow disunion. Who of us is not proud of the greatness we have achieved? Disunion and separation destroy that greatness. Once disunited, we are no longer great. The nations of the earth who have looked

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upon you as a formidable power, a mighty power, and rising to untold and immeasurable greatness in the future, will scoff at you. Your flag, that now claims the respect of the world, that protects American property in every port and harbor of the world, that protects the rights of your citizens everywhere, what will become of it? What becomes of its glorious influence? It is gone; and with it the protection of American citizens and property. To say nothing of the national honor which it displayed to all the world, the protection of your rights, the protection of your property abroad, is gone with that national flag, and we are hereafter to conjure and contrive different flags for our different republics according to the feverish fancies of revolutionary patriots and disturbers of the peace of the world. No, sir; I want to follow no such flag. I want to preserve the union of my country. We have it in our power to do so, and we are responsible if we do not do it.

I do not despair of the republic. When I see before me senators of so much intelligence and so much patriotism, who have been so honored by their country, sent here as the guardians of that very Union which is now in question, sent here as the guardians of our national rights, and as guardians of that national flag, I cannot despair; I cannot despond. I cannot but believe that they will find some means of reconciling and ad-

Benjamin F. Wade

justing the rights of all parties, by concessions, if necessary, so as to preserve and give more stability to the country and to its institutions.

John J. Crittenden, *Life* (Philadelphia, 1871), II. 231-233.

3. Defiance of Secession (1860)

By SENATOR BENJAMIN F. WADE

An Ohio antislavery senator, who delighted in hammering his opponents.

THERE is no principle held to-day by this great Republican party that has not had the sanction of your Government in every department for more than seventy years. You have changed your opinions. We stand where we used to stand. That is the only difference. . . . Sir, we stand where Washington stood, where Jefferson stood, where Madison stood, where Monroe stood. We stand where Adams and Jackson and even Polk stood. That revered statesman, Henry Clay, of blessed memory, with his dying breath asserted the doctrine that we hold to-day. . . . As to compromises, I had supposed that we were all agreed that the day of compromises was at an end. The most solemn compromises we have ever made have been violated without a *whercas*. Since I have had a seat in this body, one of considerable antiquity, that had stood for more than thirty years, was swept away from

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your statute books. . . . We nominated our candidates for President and Vice-President, and you did the same for yourselves. The issue was made up and we went to the people upon it; . . . and we beat you upon the plainest and most palpable issue that ever was presented to the American people, and one that they understood the best. There is no mistaking it; and now when we come to the capitol, I tell you that our President and our Vice-President must be inaugurated and administer the government as all their predecessors have done. Sir, it would be humiliating and dishonorable to us if we were to listen to a compromise [only] by which he who has the verdict of the people in his pocket should make his way to the Presidential chair. When it comes to that you have no government. . . . If a State secedes, although we will not make war upon her, we cannot recognize her right to be out of the Union, and she is not out until she gains the consent of the Union itself; and the chief magistrate of the nation, be he who he may, will find under the Constitution of the United States that it is his sworn duty to execute the law in every part and parcel of this Government; that he cannot be released from that obligation. . . . Therefore, it will be incumbent on the chief magistrate to proceed to collect the revenue of ships entering their ports precisely in the same way and to the same extent that he does now in every

Benjamin F. Wade

other State of the Union. . . . What must she do? If she is contented to live in this equivocal state, all would be well perhaps; but she could not live there. No people in the world could live in that condition. What will they do? They must take the initiative and declare war upon the United States; and the moment that they levy war, force must be met by force; and they must, therefore, hew out their independence by violence and war. There is no other way under the Constitution, that I know of, whereby a chief magistrate of any politics could be released from this duty. If this State, though seceding, should declare war against the United States, I do not suppose there is a lawyer in this body but what would say that the act of levying war is treason against the United States. That is where it results. We might just as well look the matter right in the face. . . .

I say, sir, I stand by the Union of these States. Washington and his compatriots fought for that good old flag. It shall never be hauled down, but shall be the glory of the Government to which I belong, as long as my life shall continue. . . . It was my protector in infancy, and the pride and glory of my riper years; and although it may be assailed by traitors on every side, by the grace of God, under its shadow I will die.

Nicolay & Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (N. Y., 1890), II. 412-414 *passim*.

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4. "Give Me a Country First!" (1861)

By SENATOR STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

When the war broke out, Douglas gave his support to Lincoln's administration for reasons set forth in this speech.

I ASK you to reflect and then point out any one act that has been done, any one duty that has been omitted to be done, of which these disunionists can justly complain. Yet we are told, simply because one party has succeeded in a Presidential election, therefore they choose to consider that their liberties are not safe, and therefore they will break up the government. I had supposed that it was a cardinal and fundamental principle of our system of government that the decision of the people at the ballot-box, without a fraud, according to the forms of the Constitution, was to command the explicit obedience of every good citizen. If their defeat at a Presidential election is to justify the minority, or any portion of the minority, in raising the traitorous hand of rebellion against the constituted authorities, you will find the future history of the United States written in the history of Mexico. . . . So far as any of the partisan questions are concerned, I stand in equal, eternal, and undying opposition to the Republicans and the Se-

Stephen A. Douglas

cessionists. You all know that I am a good partisan fighter in partisan times. And you will find me equally as good a patriot when the country is in danger. Permit me to say to the assembled Representatives and Senators of our good old State, composed of men of both political parties, that in my opinion it is your duty to lay aside your party creeds and party platforms, to lay aside your party organizations and partisan appeals, to forget that you were divided, until you have rescued the government and the country from their assailants. Then resume your partisan positions, according to your wishes. Give me a country first, that my children may live in peace; then we will have a theatre for our party organizations to operate upon. . . .

Whenever our government is assailed, when hostile armies are marching under rude and odious banners against the government of our country, the shortest way to peace is the most stupendous and unanimous preparation for war. The greater the unanimity the less blood will be shed. The more prompt and energetic is the movement, and the more important it is in numbers, the shorter will be the struggle. . . .

I am not prepared to take up arms, or to sanction a policy of our government to take up arms, to make any war on the rights of the Southern States, on their institutions, on their rights of per-

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son or property, but, on the contrary, would rush to their defence and protect them from assault; but, while that is the case, I will never cease to urge my countrymen to take arms to fight to the death in defence of our indefeasible rights. Hence, if a war does come, it is a war of self-defence on our part. It is a war in defence of our own just rights, in defence of the government which we have inherited as a priceless legacy from our patriotic fathers, in defence of our great rights of freedom of trade, commerce, transit, and intercourse from the center to the circumference of this great continent. These are rights we must struggle for and never surrender. . . .

I see no path of ambition open in a bloody struggle for triumphs over my countrymen. There is no path of ambition open to me in a divided country. Hence, whatever we do must be the result of duty, of conviction, of patriotic duty, the duty we owe to ourselves, to our posterity, and to the friends of constitutional liberty and self-government throughout the world.

My friends, I can say no more. To discuss these topics is the most painful duty of my life. It is with a sad heart, with a grief that I have never before experienced, that I have to contemplate this fearful struggle; but I believe in my conscience that it is a duty we owe to ourselves,

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our children, and our God, to protect this government and that flag from every assailant, be he who he may.

Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature* (N. Y., 1889), VII. 198-200 *passim*.

5. "What Do the Rebels Demand?" (1861)

By SENATOR ROBERT TOOMBS

Toombs, a Georgian, and later Secretary of State of the Confederacy, here sums up the demands of the South.

WHAT do the rebels demand? First, "that the people of the United States shall have an equal right to emigrate and settle in the present or any future acquired territories, with whatever property they may possess (including slaves), and be securely protected in its peaceable enjoyment until such Territory may be admitted as a State into the Union, with or without slavery, as she may determine, on an equality with all existing States." That is our territorial demand. We have fought for this Territory when blood was its price. We have paid for it when gold was its price. We have not proposed to exclude you, though you have contributed very little of blood or money. I refer especially to New England. We demand only to go into those Terri-

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tories upon terms of equality with you, as equals in this great Confederacy, to enjoy the common property of the whole Union, and receive the protection of the common government, until the Territory is capable of coming into the Union as a sovereign State, when it may fix its own institutions to suit itself.

The second proposition is, "that property in slaves shall be entitled to the same protection from the Government of the United States, in all of its departments, everywhere, which the Constitution confers the power upon it to extend to any other property, provided nothing herein contained shall be construed to limit or restrain the right now belonging to every State to prohibit, abolish, or establish and protect slavery within its limits." We demand of the common government to use its granted powers to protect our property as well as yours. . . . This recognition of this right is the price of my allegiance. Withhold it, and you do not get my obedience. This is the philosophy of the armed men who have sprung up in this country. Do you ask me to support a government that will tax my property; that will plunder me; that will demand my blood, and will not protect me? I would rather see the population of my native State laid six feet beneath her sod than they should support for one hour such a government. Protection is the price of obedience everywhere, in all coun-

Robert Toombs

tries. It is the only thing that makes government respectable. Deny it and you cannot have free subjects or citizens; you may have slaves.

We demand, in the next place, "that persons committing crimes against slave property in one State, and fleeing to another, shall be delivered up in the same manner as persons committing crimes against other property, and that the laws of the State from which such persons flee shall be the test of criminality." That is another one of the demands of an extremist and rebel. . . .

The Constitution says slaves are property; the Supreme Court says so; the Constitution says so. The theft of slaves is a crime; they are a subject-matter of felonious asportation. By the text and letter of the Constitution you agreed to give them up. You have sworn to do it, and you have broken your oaths. . . .

The next stipulation is that fugitive slaves shall be surrendered under the provisions of the fugitive-slave act of 1850, without being entitled either to a writ of *habeas corpus*, or trial by jury, or other similar obstructions of legislation, in the State to which he may flee. Here is the Constitution:

"No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service

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or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due."

This language is plain, and everybody understood it the same way for the first forty years of your government. . . .

The next demand made on behalf of the South is, "that Congress shall pass effective laws for the punishment of all persons in any of the States who shall in any manner aid and abet invasion or insurrection in any other State, or commit any other act against the laws of nations, tending to disturb the tranquillity of the people or government of any other State." That is a very plain principle. . . .

We demand these five propositions. Are they not right? Are they not just? Take them in detail, and show that they are not warranted by the Constitution, by the safety of our people, by the principles of eternal justice. We will pause and consider them; but mark me, we will not let you decide the question for us. . . .

You have sapped the foundations of society; you have destroyed almost all hope of peace. In a compact where there is no common arbiter, where the parties finally decide for themselves, the sword alone at last becomes the real, if not the constitutional, arbiter. Your party says that you will not take the decision of the Supreme Court. You said so at Chicago; you said so in committee; every man of you in both Houses

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says so. What are you going to do? You say *we shall submit to your construction*. We shall do it, if you can make us; but not otherwise, or in any other manner. That is settled. You may call it secession, or you may call it revolution; but there is a big fact standing before you, ready to oppose you—that fact is, freemen with arms in their hands. The cry of the Union will not disperse them; we have passed that point; they demand equal rights; you had better heed the demand.

Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature* (N. Y., 1888), VI. 534-537 *passim*.

6. Was Secession Revolution? (1861)

By PRESIDENT JEFFERSON DAVIS

An argument that secession is constitutional.

CALLED to the difficult and responsible station of Chief Executive of the Provisional Government which you have instituted, I approach the discharge of the duties assigned to me with an humble distrust of my abilities, but with a sustaining confidence in the wisdom of those who are to guide and aid me in the administration of public affairs, and an abiding faith in the virtue and patriotism of the people.

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Looking forward to the speedy establishment of a permanent government to take the place of this, and which, by its greater moral and physical power, will be better able to combat with the many difficulties which arise from the conflicting interests of separate nations, I enter upon the duties of the office, to which I have been chosen, with the hope that the beginning of our career, as a Confederacy, may not be obstructed by hostile opposition to our enjoyment of the separate existence and independence which we have asserted, and, with the blessing of Providence, intend to maintain. Our present condition, achieved in a manner unprecedented in the history of nations, illustrates the American idea that governments rest upon the consent of the governed, and that it is the right of the people to alter or abolish governments whenever they become destructive of the ends for which they were established.

The declared purpose of the compact of union was "to establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and posterity;" and when, in the judgment of the sovereign States now composing this Confederacy, it had been perverted from the purposes for which it was ordained, and had ceased to answer the ends for which it was established, a peaceful appeal to the ballot-

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box, declared, that so far as they were concerned, the government created by that compact should cease to exist. In this they merely asserted a right which the Declaration of Independence of 1776 had defined to be inalienable. Of the time and occasion for its exercise, they, as sovereigns, were the final judges, each for itself. The impartial and enlightened verdict of mankind will vindicate the rectitude of our conduct, and He, who knows the hearts of men, will judge of the sincerity with which we labored to preserve the government of our fathers in its spirit. The right solemnly proclaimed at the birth of the States, and which has been affirmed and re-affirmed in the bills of rights of States subsequently admitted into the Union of 1789, undeniably recognizes in the people the power to resume the authority delegated for the purposes of government. Thus the sovereign States, here represented, proceeded to form this Confederacy, and it is by abuse of language that their act has been denominated a revolution. They formed a new alliance, but within each State its government has remained, and the rights of person and property have not been disturbed. The agent, through whom they communicated with foreign nations, is changed; but this does not necessarily interrupt their international relations.

*F. H. Alfrieds, *Life of Jefferson Davis* (Cincinnati, 1868), 240-241.

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7. Going with His State (1861)

By VICE PRESIDENT ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS

(See note above, p. 144.) The best statement of the position of men who oppose secession with all their might up to the actual vote of a state convention.

My position and views upon these questions in the past may be known to you. If not, it may be proper to state, and I feel no reluctance in declaring, in your presence here in the capitol of the old commonwealth of Virginia, that there never breathed a human spirit on the soil of America more strongly and devoutly attached to the Union of our fathers than I. I was, however, in favor of no Union that did not secure perfect equality and protection of all rights guaranteed under the constitution. I was not insensible of the fact that several of the northern States had openly repudiated their constitutional obligations, and that if the principles of the present dominant party should be carried out, ultimate separation was inevitable. But still, I did trust that there was wisdom and patriotism enough at the north, when aroused, to correct the evils, to right the wrongs and to do us justice. I trusted even to the last, for some hopeful reaction in the popular sentiment at the North.

I was attached to the Union, however, not on account of the Union *per se*, but I was at-

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tached to it for what was its soul, its vitality and spirit; these were the living embodiments of the great principles of self-government, springing from the great truth, that the just powers of all governments are derived from the consent of the governed, as it was transmitted to us by our fathers. This is the foundation on which alone all constitutional liberty is and must be based—and to these principles I am to-day attached just as ardently as I ever was before, and I now announce to you my solemn conviction that the only hope you have for the preservation of these principles, is by your alliance with those who have rescued, restored, and re-established them in the constitution of the Confederate States—there is no hope in the States north.

The disagreements that existed in our State as to the course that we should pursue, before the last resort of secession was adopted, were more as to the mode and manner of redress, than as to the cause of the grievance or the existence of the grievance requiring redress. I take this occasion, in passing, to state to you, that in our convention there was considerable difference of opinion on this view of the subject. It may not be known to you that on that occasion, I disagreed with the majority on the course adopted. My vote was recorded against the secession ordinance in our State. I was for

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making one more effort, and for getting the whole South united if possible in that effort for redress.

But when the State in her sovereign capacity determined otherwise, my judgment was yielded to hers. My allegiance was due to her. My fortunes were linked with hers; her cause was my cause; and her destiny was my destiny. A large minority in that convention voted as I did. But after secession was determined on by the majority, a resolution was drawn up to the effect, that whereas the lack of unanimity on the passage of the ordinance, was owing more to a disagreement as to the proper mode at the time for a redress of existing wrongs and threatened wrongs, than as to the fact of the existence of such wrongs as required redress; therefore, after the mode and manner was adopted by a majority of the convention, that all of us, as an evidence of our determination to maintain the State in her chosen remedy, should sign the ordinance; and with that determination under that resolution, every member of the convention, except six, signed it. Those six also declared upon record a like determination on their part. So our State became a unit upon the measure, when it was resolved upon. All anterior differences amongst us were dropped. The cause of Georgia was the cause of us all; and so I trust it will be in Virginia. Let all past

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differences be forgotten. Whether, if some other course had been adopted, our rights could have ultimately been secured in the old Union, is a problem now that can never be solved. I am free to confess, as I frankly do, that the late indications afford strong evidence that the majority at the North were bent upon our destruction at every cost and every hazard. At all events, we know that our only hope now is in our own strong arms and stout hearts, with unity among ourselves. Our course is adopted. We can take no steps backward. The time for compromise, if it ever existed, is past. Many entertained hopes from the "Peace Congress"—that failed. Even an extension of the Missouri line, which was offered by prominent southern men, was sullenly rejected. Every indication of northern sentiment on the part of the dominant party there, since the election last fall, shows that they were and are bent upon carrying out their aggressive and destructive policy against us. This they insidiously expected to succeed in, by relying upon the known strong Union sentiment in the border States. They evidently relied strongly on this in Virginia. Their policy being to divide and conquer. In this, I think, however, they counted without their host.

The people of Virginia may have been attached to the Union; but they are much more

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attached to their homes, their firesides and all that is dear to freemen—constitutional liberty.

All hopes of preserving this in the old Union are gone forever. We must for the future look to ourselves.

Henry Cleveland, *Alexander H. Stephens* (Philadelphia, etc., 1867), 736-738.

8. The Union Made the States and Not the States the Union (1861)

By PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The final argument of nationality as against State Rights. Part of Lincoln's first message to Congress.

OUR States have neither more nor less power than that reserved to them in the Union by the Constitution—no one of them ever having been a State out of the Union. The original ones passed into the Union even before they cast off their British colonial dependence; and the new ones each came into the Union directly from a condition of dependence, excepting Texas. And even Texas, in its temporary independence, was never designated a State. The new ones only took the designation of States on coming into the Union, while that name was first adopted for the old ones in and by the Declaration of Independence. Therein the "United Colonies"

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were declared to be "free and independent States"; but even then the object plainly was not to declare their independence of one another or of the Union, but directly the contrary, as their mutual pledge and their mutual action before, at the time, and afterward, abundantly show. The express plighting of faith by each and all of the original thirteen in the Articles of Confederation, two years later, that the Union shall be perpetual, is most conclusive. Having never been States either in substance or in name outside of the Union, whence this magical omnipotence of "State Rights," asserting a claim of power to lawfully destroy the Union itself? Much is said about the "sovereignty" of the States; but the word even is not in the National Constitution, nor, as is believed, in any of the State constitutions. What is "sovereignty" in the political sense of the term? Would it be far wrong to define it "a political community without a political superior"? Tested by this, no one of our States except Texas ever was a sovereignty. And even Texas gave up the character on coming into the Union; by which act she acknowledged the Constitution of the United States, and the laws and treaties of the United States made in pursuance of the Constitution, to be for her the supreme law of the land. The States have their status in the Union, and they have no other legal status. If they break from

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this, they can only do so against law and by revolution. The Union, and not themselves separately, procured their independence and their liberty. By conquest or purchase the Union gave each of them whatever of independence or liberty it has. The Union is older than any of the States, and, in fact, it created them as States. Originally some dependent colonies made the Union, and, in turn, the Union threw off their old dependence for them, and made them States, such as they are. Not one of them ever had a State constitution independent of the Union. Of course, it is not forgotten that all the new States framed their constitutions before they entered the Union—nevertheless, dependent upon and preparatory to coming into the Union.

Abraham Lincoln, *State Papers* (N. Y., 1907), 16-18.

9. "The National Flag" (1861)

By REVEREND HENRY WARD BEECHER

A famous minister and orator, renowned for his patriotic speeches.

THIS nation has a banner, too; and until recently wherever it streamed abroad men saw day-break bursting on their eyes. For until lately the American flag has been a symbol of Liberty, and men rejoiced in it. Not another

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flag on the globe had such an errand, or went forth upon the sea carrying everywhere, the world around, such hope to the captive, and such glorious tidings. The stars upon it were to the pining nations like the bright morning stars of God, and the stripes upon it were beams of morning light. As at early dawn the stars shine forth even while it grows light, and then as the sun advances that light breaks into banks and streaming lines of color, the glowing red and intense white striving together, and ribbing the horizon with bars effulgent, so, on the American flag, stars and beams of many-colored light shine out together. And wherever this flag comes, and men behold it, they see in its sacred emblazonry no ramping lion, and no fierce eagle; no embattled castles, or insignia of imperial authority; they see the symbols of light. It is the banner of Dawn. It means *Liberty*; and the galley-slave, the poor, oppressed conscript, the trodden-down creature of foreign despotism, sees in the American flag that very promise and prediction of God,—“The people which sat in darkness saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” . . .

“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, *that it may be displayed.*”

And displayed it shall be. Advanced full against the morning light, and borne with the

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growing and the glowing day, it shall take the last ruddy beams of the night, and from the Atlantic wave, clear across with eagle flight to the Pacific, that banner shall float, meaning all the liberty which it has ever meant! From the North, where snows and mountain ice stand solitary, clear to the glowing tropics and the Gulf, that banner that has hitherto waved shall wave and wave forever,—every star, every band, every thread and fold significant of Liberty! . . .

And now God speaks by the voice of his providence, saying, "Lift again that banner! Advance it full and high!" To your hand, and to yours, God and your country commit that imperishable trust. You go forth self-called, or rather called by the trust of your countrymen and by the Spirit of your God, to take that trailing banner out of the dust and out of the mire, and lift it again where God's rains can cleanse it, and where God's free air can cause it to unfold and stream as it has always floated before the wind. God bless the men that go forth to save from disgrace the American flag!

Accept it, then, in all its fulness of meaning. It is not a painted rag. It is a whole national history. It is the Constitution. It is the government. It is the free people that stand in the government on the Constitution. Forget not what it means; and for the sake of its ideas, rather than its mere emblazonry, be true to your

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country's flag. By your hands lift it; but let your lifting it be no holiday display. It must be advanced "*because of the truth.*"

That flag must go to the capital of this nation; and it must go not hidden, not secreted, not in a case or covering, but advanced full high, displayed, bright as the sun, clear as the moon, terrible as an army with banners! . . .

And it must not stop there. The country does not belong to us from the Lakes only to Washington, but from the Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.

The flag must go on. The land of Washington shall see Washington's flag again. The land that sits in darkness, and in which the people see no light, shall yet see light dawn, and liberty flash from the old American banner! It must see Charleston again, and float again over every fort in Charleston harbor. It must go further, to the Alligator State, and stand there again. And, sweeping up through all plantations, and over all fields of sugar and rice and tobacco, and every other thing, it must be found in every State till you touch the Mississippi. And, bathing in its waters, it must go across and fill Texas with its sacred light. Nor must it stop when it floats over every one of the States. That flag must stand, bearing its whole historic spirit and original meaning, in every Territory of this nation! . . .

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And if you fall in that struggle, may some kind hand wrap around about you the flag of your country, and may you die with its sacred touch upon you. It shall be sweet to go to rest lying in the folds of your country's banner, meaning, as it shall mean, "Liberty and Union, now and forever."

We will not forget you. You go forth from us not to be easily and lightly passed over. The waves shall not close over the places which you have held; but when you return, not as you go, many of you inexperienced, and many of you unknown, you shall return from the conquests of liberty with a reputation and a character established forever to your children and your children's children. It shall be an honor, it shall be a legend, it shall be a historic truth; and your posterity shall say: "Our fathers stood up in the day of peril, and laid again the foundations of liberty that were shaken; and in their hands the banner of our country streamed forth like the morning star upon the night."

Henry Ward Beecher, *Freedom and War* (Boston, 1863), 112-129 *passim*.

Morgan Dix

10. How the North Rose (1861)

By REVEREND MORGAN DIX

A New York clergyman.

THE North rose as one man. The question had been asked by those who were watching events, "How will New York go?" There were sinister hopes in certain quarters of a strong sympathy with the secession movement; dreams that New York might decide on cutting off from the rest of the country and becoming a free-city. These hopes and dreams vanished in a day. The reply to the question how New York would go was given with an energy worthy of herself.

The 15th of that month brought President Lincoln's proclamation and the call for 75,000 men—a bagatelle, as it proved, compared with the number required; but the figures seemed enormous to the popular eye, and the demand set the whole city in a blaze. Never to my dying day shall I forget a scene witnessed on Thursday of that week. A regiment had arrived from Massachusetts on the way to Washington, *via* Baltimore. They came in at night; and it was understood that, after breakfasting at the Astor House, the march would be resumed. By nine o'clock in the morning an immense crowd had assembled about the hotel: Broadway, from Barclay to Fulton Street, and the lower end of Park

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Row, were occupied by a dense mass of human beings, all watching the front entrance, at which the regiment was to file out. From side to side, from wall to wall, extended that innumerable host, silent as the grave, expectant, something unspeakable in the faces. It was the dead, deep hush before the thunder-storm. At last a low murmur was heard; it sounded somewhat like a gasp of men in suspense; and the cause was, that the soldiers had appeared, their leading files descending the steps. By the twinkle of their bayonets above the heads of the crowd their course could be traced out into the open street in front. Formed, at last, in column, they stood, the band at the head; and the word was given, "March!" Still dead silence prevailed. Then the drums rolled out the time—the regiment was in motion. And then the band, bursting into full volume, struck up—what other tune could the Massachusetts men have chosen?—"Yankee Doodle." I caught about two bars and a half of the old music, not more. For instantly there arose a sound such as many a man never heard in all his life and never will hear; such as is never heard more than once in a lifetime. Not more awful is the thunder of heaven as, with sudden peal, it smites into silence all lesser sounds, and, rolling through the vault above us, fills earth and sky with the shock of its terrible voice. One terrific roar burst from the multi-

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tude, leaving nothing audible save its own reverberation. We saw the heads of armed men, the gleam of their weapons, the regimental colors, all moving on, pageant-like; but naught could we hear save that hoarse, heavy surge—one general acclaim, one wild shout of joy and hope, one endless cheer, rolling up and down, from side to side, above, below, to right, to left: the voice of approval, of consent, of unity in act and will. No one who saw and heard could doubt how New York was going.

After that came events the account of which fills volumes of records of our national history. The ebb of the tide was over; the waters were coming in with the steadiness and momentum of a flood which bears everything before it.

Morgan Dix, *Memoirs of John Adams Dix* (N. Y., 1883), II. 9-11.

II. A War Meeting (1861)

By ARTEMUS WARD

(*Charles F. Browne*)

A professional humorist who here pays his respects to the emotional side of the war.

OUR complaint just now is war meetins. They've bin havin 'em bad in varis parts of our cheerful Republic and nat'rally we caught 'em here in Baldinsville. They broke out all over us.

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They're better attended than the Eclipse was. . . . The war meetin was largely attended. The editor of the *Bugle* arose and got up, and said the fact could no longer be disguised that we were involved in a war. "Human gore," said he, "is flowin. All able-bodied men should seize a musket and march to the tented field. I repeat it, sir,—to the tented field."

A voice—"Why don't you go yourself, you old blowhard?"

"I am identified, young man, with an Arky-median leaver which moves the world," said the editor, wiping his auburn brow with his left coat-tail: "I allude, young man, to the press. Terms, two dollars a year, invariably in advance. Job printing executed with neatness and despatch!" And with this brilliant bust of elekanse the editor introduced Mr. J. Brutus Hinkins, who is sufferin from an attack of College in a naberin place. Mr. Hinkins said Washington was not safe. Who can save our national capeetle? . . .

"You," said Mr. Hinkins, "who live away from the busy haunts of men do not comprehend the magnitood of the crisis. The busy haunts of men is where people comprehend this crisis. We who live in the busy haunts of men—thatisto say, we dwell, as it were, in the busy haunts of men."

"I really trust that the gent'l'man will not fail to say suthin about the busy haunts of men before he sits down," said I. . . .

Artemus Ward

"But," he added, "I have a voice, and that voice is for war." The young man then closed his speech with some strikin and original remarks in relation to the star-spangled banner. . . .

At this point he was interrupted by the sounds of silvery footsteps on the stairs, and a party of wimin, carryin guns, and led by Betsy Jane, who brandishd a loud and ratlin umbereller, burst into the room. . . .

"Mrs. Ward," said the editor of the *Bugle*—"Mrs. Ward, and ladies, what means this ex-tr'ord'n'ry demonstration?"

"It means," said that remarkable female, "that you men air makin fools of yourselves. You air willin to talk and urge others to go to the wars, but you don't go to the wars yourselves. War meetins is very nice in their way, but they don't keep Stonewall Jackson from comin over to Maryland and helpin himself to the fattest beef critters. What we want is more cider and less talk. We want you able-bodied men to stop speechifyin, which don't 'mount to the wiggle of a sick cat's tail, and go to fi'tin; otherwise you can stay at home and take keer of the children, while we wimin will go to the wars!" . . .

"Is this roll-book to be filled up with the names of men or wimin?" she cried.

"With men! with men!" and our quoty was made up that very night.

There is a great deal of gas about these war

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meetins. A war meetin, in fact, without gas, would be suthin like the play of Hamlet with the part of Othello omitted.

Still believin that the Goddess of Liberty is about as well sot up with as any young lady in distress could expect to be, I am, yours more'n anybody else's,

A. WARD.

Artemus Ward, *Complete Works* (London, 1898), 247-252 *passim*.

12. No Expectation of Return to the Union (1861)

By EDWARD A. POLLARD

A Richmond editor and author of a history of the Civil War, who argues against any compromise.

THE question has often been seriously asked whether the leaders and agents of the South at Montgomery did not really entertain some prospect of going back into the Union, and to what extent the problem of reunion or "reconstruction" was mixed with their plans . . . between the people and the politicians of the South; and yet further to distinguish between the time when the latter were acting in disguise or playing an insincere part, and that when they no longer thought it necessary to wear the mask and found occasion to publish freely their opinions.

Edward A. Pollard

In the Senate of the United States, Jefferson Davis had practised either equivocation or reserve on the question of reunion. He was part of a conspiracy there; and although that conspiracy hesitated to alarm the people of the South with the idea of *irrevocable* separation, there is abundant evidence that this conclusion was first and firm in their designs. . . .

Indeed, as we have already suggested, the fact of the personal ambition of the leaders of the South being so identified with the scheme of Secession, forbids the supposition that they could ever have had any serious thought of undoing their work at Montgomery, and returning into a Union where thenceforth they would have to take degraded seats. . . .

On arriving at Montgomery, Mr. Davis broke the restraints he had worn at Washington. He threw his former prudence to the winds, and declared for separation from the North as eternal as human force could make it. He spoke with a burst of temper that suggested how much he had suffered from his continence in the Senate. In a speech to a crowd in the streets, he declared that "the South would make those who opposed her smell Southern powder and feel Southern steel;" but perhaps there was some soreness of the reporter in this language. Yet there was no doubt of his more deliberate words. He said: "The time for compromise has now

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passed, and the South is determined to maintain her position. We will maintain our rights and government at all hazards. We ask nothing, we want nothing; we will have no complications. If the other States join our Confederation they can freely come in on our terms. Our separation from the old Union is now complete. No compromise, no reconstruction is now to be entertained." Again, speaking from the balcony of his hotel: "If war should come, if we must again baptize in blood the principles for which our fathers bled in the Revolution, we shall show that we are not degenerate sons." . . .

The Southern leaders had resolved from the first on final separation, even with the added consequence of war; they had used any other pretence simply as a stepping-stone to power; and from the moment they met at Montgomery they were prepared to put the heel on every hope of reconciliation.

It was different with the *people* of the South. The evidence is as abundant as that we have just quoted to show that the politicians at Montgomery were resolved on irrevocable separation, to establish that the people of the South on the contrary—indeed up to the moment of actual bloodshed—cherished the design of reconstruction, either hoping for a return to the old Union, or inclusion in another of the same dimensions.

Edward A. Pollard

The Montgomery Convention did not represent them; it represented the States. . . .

The people became sensible of the rapid movement of the wheels of revolution under them; they were hurried along in a state of bewilderment; but there were those who loudly proclaimed their alarm, and cried out against the precipitancy. Why should not the Montgomery Convention try at least some demand, some possible expedient before the ultimatum of war? Why go so far at a single step? . . .

In truth what the thoughtful historian must most deeply meditate of the causes and origin of the late war is the extent to which the popular element of the South was excluded from its inception. It was in constant subjection from the moment a conspiracy of Southern Senators at Washington held at arm's-length the States and dictated their course. . . . It had no direct representation in the Convention at Montgomery. It did not confirm their work. It had nothing to do with the early acts of the war; and briefly the astounding fact appears that the first time the *people* of the South had direct action on their affairs since the election of Abraham Lincoln was to vote for a President, *after* Mr. Davis had been "provisional" chief or practical dictator, one whole year, counting from his inauguration. . . .

Edward A. Pollard, *Life of Jefferson Davis* (Atlanta, 1869), 91-95 *passim*.

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13. Despair of a Radical (1861)

By HORACE GREELEY

(See note above, p. 234.) Greeley, in his newspaper, advocated "Letting the erring sisters go in peace," but afterward strongly supported the war.

THIS is my seventh sleepless night—yours, too, doubtless—yet I think I shall not die, because I have no right to die. I must struggle to live, however bitterly. But to business. You are not considered a great man, and I am a hopelessly broken one. You are now undergoing a terrible ordeal, and God has thrown the gravest responsibilities upon you. Do not fear to meet them. Can the rebels be beaten after all that has occurred, and in view of the actual state of feeling caused by our late, awful disaster? If they can,—and it is your business to ascertain and decide,—write me that such is your judgment, so that I may know and do my duty. And if they *cannot* be beaten,—if our recent disaster is fatal,—do not fear to sacrifice yourself to your country. If the rebels are not to be beaten,—if that is your judgment in view of all the light you can get,—then every drop of blood henceforth shed in this quarrel will be wantonly, wickedly shed, and the guilt will rest heavily on the soul of every promoter of the crime. I pray you to decide quickly and let me know my duty.

Horace Greeley

If the Union is irrevocably gone, an armistice for thirty, sixty, ninety, one hundred and twenty days—better still for a year—ought at once to be proposed, with a view to a peaceful adjustment. Then Congress should call a National Convention, to meet at the earliest possible day. And there should be an immediate and mutual exchange or release of prisoners and a disbandment of forces. I do not consider myself at present a judge of anything but the public sentiment. That seems to me everywhere gathering and deepening against a prosecution of the war. The gloom in this city is funereal—for our dead at Bull Run were many, and they lie unburied yet. On every brow sits sullen, scorching, black despair. It would be easy to have Mr. Crittenden move any proposition that ought to be adopted, or to have it come from any proper quarter. The first point is to ascertain what is best that can be done,—which is the measure of our duty,—and do that very thing at the earliest moment.

This letter is written in the strictest confidence, and is for your eye alone. But you are at liberty to say to members of your Cabinet that you *know* I will second any move you may see fit to make. But do nothing timidly nor by halves. Send me word what to do. I will live till I can hear it at all events. If it is best for the country and for mankind that we make peace with the

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rebels at once and on their own terms, do not shrink even from that. But bear in mind the greatest truth: "Whoso would lose his life for my sake shall save it." Do the thing that is the highest right, and tell me how I am to second you.

Yours, in the depths of bitterness,

Nicolay & Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (N. Y., 1890), IV. 365-366.

14. The Flag of the Union (1861)

By ROBERT C. WINTHROP

(See note above, p. 30.)

YOUR venerable chaplain has embodied it all in that sparkling lyric—"E Pluribus Unum"—which might well be adopted as the secular song of your noble regiment. It is nothing more, and nothing less, than a sentiment of duty to our whole country; of devotion to its Union; of allegiance to its rulers; of loyalty to its Constitution; and of undying love to that old Flag of our Fathers, which was associated, with the earliest achievement of our liberty, and which we are resolved shall be associated with its latest defence. It is nothing more, and nothing less, than a determination that neither fraud nor force, neither secret conspiracy nor open rebellion, shall supplant that flag on the dome of our Capitol, or

Robert C. Winthrop

permanently humble it anywhere beneath the sun ; —that the American Union shall not be rent asunder without catching in the cleft those who may attempt it ; nor these cherished institutions of ours be cast down and trampled in the dust, until, at last, we have made the best, the bravest, the most strenuous struggle to save them, which the blessing upon our own strong arms, and in answer to the prayers of a nation on its knees, shall have enabled us to make.

Massachusetts, I need not say, has arrayed her numerous regiments at the call of the National government, and under the direction of her own untiring Executive,—for no purpose of subjugation or aggression ; in no spirit of revenge or hatred ; with no disposition and with no willingness to destroy or impair any constitutional right of any section or of any citizen of the Republic. She would as soon wear a yoke upon her own neck, as she would aid in imposing one on the neck of a sister State. She sends forth her armed battalions—the flower of Essex and Middlesex, of Norfolk and Suffolk, of both her Capes and of all her hills and valleys—in no spirit but that of her own honored motto, "*Ense quietem.*"—only to enforce the laws ; only to sustain the government ; only to uphold the Stars and Stripes ; only to aid in restoring to the whole people of the land that quiet enjoyment of liberty, which nothing but the faithful observance

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of the Constitution of our Fathers can secure to us and our posterity.

“Union for the sake of the Union;” “our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country”—these are the mottoes, old, stale, hackneyed and threadbare, as they may have seemed when employed as the watchwords of an electioneering campaign, but clothed with a new power, a new significance, a new gloss and a new glory, when uttered as the battle-cries of a nation struggling for existence; these are the only mottoes which can give a just and adequate expression to the cause in which you have enlisted. Sir, I thank Heaven that the trumpet has given no uncertain sound while you have been preparing yourselves for the battle. . . .

This, finally, is the cause which has obliterated, as no other cause could have done, all divisions and distinctions of party, nationality, and creed; which has appealed alike to Republican, Democrat, and Union Whig, to native citizen and to adopted citizen; and in which not the sons of Massachusetts or of New England, or of the North alone, not the dwellers on the Hudson, the Delaware, and the Susquehanna only, but so many of those, also, on the Potomac and the Ohio, the Mississippi and the Missouri, on all the lakes, and in all the vast Mesopotamia of the mighty West,—yes, and strangers from beyond the seas, Irish and Scotch, German, Italian, and

Robert C. Winthrop

French,—the common emigrant and those who have stood nearest to a throne,—brave and devoted men from almost every nation under heaven,—men who have measured the value of our country to the world by a nobler standard than the cotton crop, and who realize that other and more momentous destinies are at stake upon our struggle than such as can be wrought upon any mere material looms and shuttles,—all-all are seen rallying beneath a common flag, and exclaiming with one heart and voice, “The American Union,—it must be, and shall be, preserved.”

Robert C. Winthrop, *Speeches and Addresses* (Boston, 1867), 506-509 *passim*.

CHAPTER XXX — PRINCIPLES OF FREE GOVERNMENT (1861-1865)

In the Civil War, heroic self-sacrifice and devotion were shown by both sides. Neither has a right to accuse the other of weakness or lukewarmness in its cause. From the point of view of patriotism, the most striking feature of the war is the lofty and elevated utterances of Abraham Lincoln, who embraced both sections in his affection and his desire for peace and liberty. Part of Edward Everett Hale's "A Man Without a Country" is quoted because it represents the nationalistic sense of allegiance to the Federal Government, which was Lincoln's mainstay. Otherwise, nearly all the pieces in this chapter are from the pen or voice of Abraham Lincoln, and they set forth the doctrines of equality, opportunity, and peace which Lincoln did so much to crystallize and fix forever in the minds of his country. Nothing better illustrates the patriotism of the whole than these utterances of Lincoln, some from his formal messages and some from off-hand addresses made from the balcony of the White House. The chapter closes with three or four of the best tributes to Lincoln as a man, a statesman and a patriot, including a recent address by President Woodrow Wilson.



From the A. K. Kipp portrait.

I. Appeal for Union (1861)

By PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

From Lincoln's first inaugural which was an appeal to both sections to stand by the Union.

PHYSICALLY speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

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This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it. I will venture to add that to me the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves, instead of only permitting them to take or reject propositions originated by others not especially chosen for the purpose, and which might not be precisely such as they would wish to either accept or refuse. I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen—has passed Congress, to the effect that the Federal Government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconception of what I have said, I depart from my pur-

Abraham Lincoln

pose not to speak of particular amendments so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objection to its being made express and irrevocable.

The chief magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people themselves can do this also if they choose; but the executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present government, as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor.

Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme

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of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend it."

I am loath to close. We are not enemies.

Abraham Lincoln

but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

Abraham Lincoln, *Presidential Speeches* (N. Y., 1907), 143-146.

2. The West for Freedom (1862)

By PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Lincoln can be understood only as a man imbued with the spirit of the West.

A NATION may be said to consist of its territory, its people, and its laws. The territory is the only part which is of certain durability. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth forever." It is of the first importance to duly consider and estimate this ever-enduring part. That portion of the earth's surface which is owned and inhabited by the people of the United States is well adapted to be the home of one national family, and it is not well adapted for two or more. Its vast extent and its variety of climate and productions are of advantage in this age

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for one people, whatever they might have been in former ages. Steam, telegraphs, and intelligence have brought these to be an advantageous combination for one united people. . . .

There is no line, straight or crooked, suitable for a national boundary upon which to divide. Trace through, from east to west, upon the line between the free and slave country, and we shall find a little more than one third of its length are rivers, easy to be crossed, and populated, or soon to be populated, thickly upon both sides; while nearly all its remaining length are merely surveyors' lines, over which people may walk back and forth without any consciousness of their presence. No part of this line can be made any more difficult to pass by writing it down on paper or parchment as a national boundary. The fact of separation, if it comes, gives up on the part of the seceding section the fugitive-slave clause along with all other constitutional obligations upon the section seceded from, while I should expect no treaty stipulation would be ever made to take its place.

But there is another difficulty. The great interior region, bounded east by the Alleghanies, north by the British dominions, west by the Rocky Mountains, and south by the line along which the culture of corn and cotton meets, and which includes part of Virginia, part of Tennessee, all of Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Michi-

Abraham Lincoln

gan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, and the Territories of Dakota, Nebraska, and part of Colorado, already has above ten millions of people, and will have fifty millions within fifty years if not prevented by any political folly or mistake. It contains more than one third of the country owned by the United States—certainly more than one million of square miles. Once half as populous as Massachusetts already is, it would have more than seventy-five millions of people. A glance at the map shows that, territorially speaking, it is the great body of the republic. The other parts are but marginal borders to it, the magnificent region sloping west from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific being the deepest and also the richest in undeveloped resources. In the production of provisions, grains, grasses, and all which proceed from them, this great interior region is naturally one of the most important in the world. Ascertain from the statistics the small proportion of the region which has, as yet, been brought into cultivation, and also the large and rapidly increasing amount of its products, and we shall be overwhelmed with the magnitude of the prospect presented; and yet this region has no sea-coast, touches no ocean anywhere. As part of one nation, its people now find, and may forever find, their way to Europe by New York, to South America and Africa by

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New Orleans, and to Asia by San Francisco. But separate our common country into two nations, as designed by the present rebellion, and every man of this great interior region is thereby cut off from some one or more of these outlets—not, perhaps, by a physical barrier, but by embarrassing and onerous trade regulations.

And this is true wherever a dividing or boundary line may be fixed. Place it between the now free and slave country, or place it south of Kentucky or north of Ohio, and still the truth remains that none south of it can trade to any port or place north of it, and none north of it can trade to any port or place south of it, except upon terms dictated by a government foreign to them. These outlets, east, west, and south, are indispensable to the well-being of the people inhabiting, and to inhabit, this vast interior region. Which of the three may be the best, is no proper question. All are better than either; and all of right belong to that people and to their successors forever. True to themselves, they will not ask where a line of separation shall be, but will vow rather that there shall be no such line. Nor are the marginal regions less interested in these communications to and through them to the great outside world. They, too, and each of them, must have access to this Egypt of the West without paying toll at the crossing of any national boundary.

Abraham Lincoln

Our national strife springs not from our permanent part, not from the land we inhabit, not from our national homestead. There is no possible severing of this but would multiply, and not mitigate, evils among us. In all its adaptations and aptitudes it demands union and abhors separation. In fact, it would ere long force reunion, however much of blood and treasure the separation might have cost.

Our strife pertains to ourselves—to the passing generations of men; and it can without convulsion be hushed forever with the passing of one generation. . . .

Abraham Lincoln, *State Papers* (N. Y., 1907), 65-69.

3. Proclamation of Emancipation (1863)

By PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Preceded by the preliminary proclamation of September 22, 1852. Practically made certain that slavery would disappear.

January 1, 1863.

WHEREAS, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

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“That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

“That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof respectively shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall in the absence of strong countervailing testimony be deemed conclusive evidence that such State and the people thereof are not then in rebellion against the United States.”

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as commander-in-chief of the army

Abraham Lincoln

and navy of the United States, in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of 100 days from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof, respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated

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States and parts of States are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness, etc.

Abraham Lincoln.

By the President:

William H. Seward, Secretary of State.

Abraham Lincoln, *State Papers* (N. Y., 1907), 145-148.

Abraham Lincoln

4. The Speech at Gettysburg (1862)

By PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

One of the noblest pieces of English ever written. The high-water mark of Lincoln's greatness.

ADDRESS delivered at the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war; testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who

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or detract. The world will little note, nor
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never forget what they did here. It is for us
the living, rather, to be dedicated here to
the unfinished work which they who fought
here have thus far so nobly advanced.
It is rather for us to be here dedicated to
the great task remaining before us,— that
from these honored dead we take increased
devotion to that cause for which they gave
the last full measure of devotion— that
we here highly resolve that these dead shall
not have died in vain— that this nation,
under God, shall have a new birth of free-
dom— and that government of the people,
by the people, for the people, shall not per-
ish from the earth.

Abraham Lincoln

November 19. 1863.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

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fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us,—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Abraham Lincoln.

November 19, 1863.

Nicolay & Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, a History* (N. Y., 1890), VIII. 200-201.

5. The Loss of Sons (1864)

By PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A tribute to the patriotic mothers of America.

Washington, November 21, 1864.

Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Massachusetts.

Dear Madam: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so

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overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

Abraham Lincoln.

Abraham Lincoln, *Life and Writings* (N. Y., 1907),
I. 61.

6. "Malice Toward None—Charity Toward All" (1865)

By PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The second inaugural address which shows that had Lincoln not been assassinated within a few days he would have led the country successfully through reconstruction.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still

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absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no

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right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him?

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Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

Abraham Lincoln, *Presidential Speeches* (N. Y., 1907), 223-225.

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7. "New Birth of Our New Soil, the First American" (1865)

By JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Tribute to Lincoln at the Harvard Commemoration
in 1865.

LIFE may be given in many ways,

And loyalty to Truth be sealed

As bravely in the closet as the field,

So generous is Fate;

But then to stand beside her

When craven churls deride her,

To front a lie in arms and not to yield,—

This shows, methinks, God's plan

And measure of a stalwart man,

Limbed like the old heroic breeds,

Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid
earth,

Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

Such was he, our Martyr-chief,

Whom late the Nation he had led,

With ashes on her head,

Wept with the passion of an angry grief:

Forgive me if from present things I turn

To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,

And hang my wreath on his world-honored
urn.

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Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote;
For him her Old-World mould aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead,
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust,
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and
thrust.

[His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest
stars.]

Nothing of Europe here,

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Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface;
[And thwart her genial will ;]
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face
to face.

I praise him not ; it were too late ;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.

So always firmly he ;
He knew to bide his time
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide ;
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour ;
But at last silence comes ;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

James Russell Lowell, *Ode* (Cambridge, 1865), 15-18.

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8. Abraham Lincoln (1909)

By PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Address delivered by the President of the United States (1901-1909) at the ceremony of the laying of the corner stone of the Lincoln Memorial at his birth-place, Hodgenville, Ky., Feb. 12, 1909.

WE have met here to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the birth of one of the two greatest Americans; of one of the two or three greatest men of the nineteenth century; of one of the greatest men in the world's history. This rail-splitter, this boy who passed his ungainly youth in the dire poverty of the poorest of the frontier folk, whose rise was by weary and painful labor, lived to lead his people through the burning flames of a struggle from which the nation emerged, purified as by fire, born anew to a loftier life. After long years of iron effort, and of failure that came more often than victory, he at last rose to the leadership of the Republic, at the moment when that leadership had become the stupendous world-task of the time. He grew to know greatness, but never ease. Success came to him, but never happiness, save that which springs from doing well a painful and a vital task. Power was his, but not pleasure. The furrows deepened on his brow, but his eyes were undimmed by either hate or fear. His gaunt shoulders were bowed, but his steel thews never fal-

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tered as he bore for a burden the destinies of his people. His great and tender heart shrank from giving pain; and the task allotted him was to pour out like water the life-blood of the young men, and to feel in his every fiber the sorrow of the women. Disaster saddened but never dismayed him. As the red years of war went by they found him ever doing his duty in the present, ever facing the future with fearless front, high of heart, and dauntless of soul. Unbroken by hatred, unshaken by scorn, he worked and suffered for the people. Triumph was his at the last; and barely had he tasted it before murder found him, and the kindly, patient, fearless eyes were closed forever.

As a people we are indeed beyond measure fortunate in the characters of the two greatest of our public men, Washington and Lincoln. Widely though they differed in externals, the Virginia landed gentleman and the Kentucky backwoodsman, they were alike in essentials, they were alike in the great qualities which made each able to do service to his nation and to all mankind such as no other man of his generation could or did render. Each had lofty ideals, but each in striving to attain these lofty ideals was guided by the soundest common sense. Each possessed inflexible courage in adversity, and a soul wholly unspoiled by prosperity. Each possessed all the gentler virtues commonly exhibited by good men

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who lack rugged strength of character. Each possessed also all the strong qualities commonly exhibited by those towering masters of mankind who have too often shown themselves devoid of so much as the understanding of the words by which we signify the qualities of duty, of mercy, of devotion to the right, of lofty disinterestedness in battling for the good of others. There have been other men as great and other men as good; but in all the history of mankind there are no other two great men as good as these, no other two good men as great. Widely though the problems of to-day differ from the problems set for solution to Washington when he founded this nation, to Lincoln when he saved it and freed the slave, yet the qualities they showed in meeting these problems are exactly the same as those we should show in doing our work to-day.

Lincoln saw into the future with the prophetic imagination usually vouchsafed only to the poet and the seer. He had in him all the lift toward greatness of the visionary, without any of the visionary's fanaticism or egotism, without any of the visionary's narrow jealousy of the practical man and inability to strive in practical fashion for the realization of an ideal. He had the practical man's hard common sense and willingness to adapt means to ends; but there was in him none of that morbid growth of mind and soul which blinds so many practical men to the higher

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things of life. No more practical man ever lived than this homely backwoods idealist; but he had nothing in common with those practical men whose consciences are warped until they fail to distinguish between good and evil, fail to understand that strength, ability, shrewdness, whether in the world of business or of politics, only serve to make their possessor a more noxious, a more evil, member of the community if they are not guided and controlled by a fine and high moral sense.

We of this day must try to solve many social and industrial problems, requiring to an especial degree the combination of indomitable resolution with cool-headed sanity. We can profit by the way in which Lincoln used both these traits as he strove for reform. We can learn much of value from the very attacks which following that course brought upon his head, attacks alike by the extremists of revolution and by the extremists of reaction. He never wavered in devotion to his principles, in his love for the Union, and in his abhorrence of slavery. Timid and lukewarm people were always denouncing him because he was too extreme; but as a matter of fact he never went to extremes, he worked step by step; and because of this the extremists hated and denounced him with a fervor which now seems to us fantastic in its deification of the unreal and the impossible. At the very time when one side

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was holding him up as the apostle of social revolution because he was against slavery, the leading abolitionist denounced him as the "slave hound of Illinois." When he was the second time candidate for President, the majority of his opponents attacked him because of what they termed his extreme radicalism, while a minority threatened to bolt his nomination because he was not radical enough. He had continually to check those who wished to go forward too fast, at the very time that he overrode the opposition of those who wished not to go forward at all. The goal was never dim before his vision; but he picked his way cautiously, without either halt or hurry, as he strode toward it, through such a morass of difficulty that no man of less courage would have attempted it, while it would surely have overwhelmed any man of judgment less serene. Yet perhaps the most wonderful thing of all, and, from the standpoint of the America of to-day and of the future, the most vitally important, was the extraordinary way in which Lincoln could fight valiantly against what he deemed wrong and yet preserve undiminished his love and respect for the brother from whom he differed. In the hour of a triumph that would have turned any weaker man's head, in the heat of a struggle which spurred many a good man to dreadful vindictiveness, he said truthfully that so long as he had been in his office he had never

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willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom, and besought his supporters to study the incidents of the trial through which they were passing as philosophy from which to learn wisdom and not as wrongs to be avenged; ending with the solemn exhortation that, as the strife was over, all should reunite in a common effort to save their common country.

He lived in days that were great and terrible, when brother fought against brother for what each sincerely deemed to be the right. In a contest so grim the strong men who alone can carry it through are rarely able to do justice to the deep convictions of those with whom they grapple in mortal strife. At such times men see through a glass darkly; to only the rarest and loftiest spirits is vouchsafed that clear vision which gradually comes to all, even to the lesser, as the struggle fades into distance, and wounds are forgotten, and peace creeps back to the hearts that were hurt. But to Lincoln was given this supreme vision. He did not hate the man from whom he differed. Weakness was as foreign as wickedness to his strong, gentle nature; but his courage was of a quality so high that it needed no bolstering of dark passion. He saw clearly that the same high qualities, the same courage, and willingness for self-sacrifice, and devotion to the right as it was given them to see the right, belonged both to the men of the North and to the

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men of the South. As the years roll by, and as all of us, wherever we dwell, grow to feel an equal pride in the valor and self-devotion, alike of the men who wore the blue and the men who wore the gray, so this whole nation will grow to feel a peculiar sense of pride in the mightiest of the mighty men who mastered the mighty days; the lover of his country and of all mankind; the man whose blood was shed for the union of his people and for the freedom of a race, Abraham Lincoln.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

9. Abraham Lincoln (1916)

By PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON

Address by Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, on the occasion of the acceptance by the War Department of a deed of gift to the nation by the Lincoln Farm Association of the Lincoln birth-place farm at Hodgenville, Ky. Here, over the log cabin where Abraham Lincoln was born, destined to preserve the nation and to free the slave, a grateful people have dedicated this memorial to unity, peace, and brotherhood among these States.

No more significant memorial could have been presented to the nation than this. It expresses so much of what is singular and noteworthy in the history of the country; it sug-

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gests so many of the things that we prize most highly in our life and in our system of government. How eloquent this little house within this shrine is of the vigor of democracy! There is nowhere in the land any home so remote, so humble, that it may not contain the power of mind and heart and conscience to which nations yield and history submits its processes. Nature pays no tribute to aristocracy, subscribes to no creed of caste, renders fealty to no monarch or master of any name or kind. Genius is no snob. It does not run after titles or seek by preference the high circles of society. It affects humble company as well as great. It pays no special tribute to universities or learned societies or conventional standards of greatness, but serenely chooses its own comrades, its own haunts, its own cradle even, and its own life of adventure and of training. Here is proof of it. This little hut was the cradle of one of the great sons of men, a man of singular, delightful, vital genius who presently emerged upon the great stage of the nation's history, gaunt, shy, ungainly, but dominant and majestic, a natural ruler of men, himself inevitably the central figure of the great plot. No man can explain this, but every man can see how it demonstrates the vigor of democracy, where every door is open, in every hamlet and countryside, in city and wilderness alike, for the ruler to emerge when he will and claim his

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leadership in the free life. Such are the authentic proofs of the validity and vitality of democracy.

Here, no less, hides the mystery of democracy. Who shall guess this secret of nature and providence and a free polity? Whatever the vigor and vitality of the stock from which he sprang, its mere vigor and soundness do not explain where this man got his great heart that seemed to comprehend all mankind in its catholic and benignant sympathy, the mind that sat enthroned behind those brooding, melancholy eyes, whose vision swept many an horizon which those about him dreamed not of—that mind that comprehended what it had never seen, and understood the language of affairs with the ready ease of one to the manner born—or that nature which seemed in its varied richness to be the familiar of men of every day of life. This is the sacred mystery of democracy, that its richest fruits spring up out of soils which no man has prepared and in circumstances amidst which they are the least expected. This is a place alike of mystery and of reassurance.

It is likely that in a society ordered otherwise than our own LINCOLN could not have found himself or the path of fame and power upon which he walked serenely to his death. In this place it is right that we should remind ourselves

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of the solid and striking facts upon which our faith in democracy is founded. Many another man besides Lincoln has served the nation in its highest places of counsel and of action whose origins were as humble as his. Though the greatest example of the universal energy, richness, stimulation, and force of democracy, he is only one example among many. The permeating and all-pervasive virtue of the freedom which challenges us in America to make the most of every gift and power we possess, every page of our history serves to emphasize and illustrate. Standing here in this place, it seems almost the whole of the stirring story.

Here Lincoln had his beginnings. Here the end and consummation of that great life seems remote and a bit incredible. And yet there was no break anywhere between beginning and end, no lack of natural sequence anywhere. Nothing really incredible happened. Lincoln was unaffectedly as much at home in the White House as he was here. Do you share with me the feeling, I wonder, that he was permanently at home nowhere? It seems to me that in the case of a man—I would rather say of a spirit—like Lincoln the question *where* he was is of little significance, that it is always *what* he was that really arrests our thought and takes hold of our imagination. It is the spirit always that is sovereign. Lincoln, like the rest of us, was put

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through the discipline of the world—a very rough and exacting discipline for him, an indispensable discipline for every man who would know what he is about in the midst of the world's affairs; but his spirit got only its schooling there. It did not derive its character or its vision from the experiences which brought it to its full revelation. The test of every American must always be, not where he is, but what he is. That, also, is of the essence of democracy, and is the moral of which this place is most gravely expressive.

We would like to think of men like Lincoln and Washington as typical Americans, but no man can be typical who is so unusual as these great men were. It was typical of American life that it should produce such men with supreme indifference as to the manner in which it produced them, and as readily here in this hut as amidst the little circle of cultivated gentlemen to whom Virginia owed so much in leadership and example. And Lincoln and Washington were typical Americans in the use they made of their genius. But there will be few such men at best, and we will not look into the mystery of how and why they come. We will only keep the door open for them always, and a hearty welcome—after we have recognized them.

I have read many biographies of Lincoln; I have sought out with the greatest interest the

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many intimate stories that are told of him, the narratives of near-by friends, the sketches at close quarters, in which those who had the privilege of being associated with him have tried to depict for us the very man himself "in his habit as he lived"; but I have nowhere found a real intimate of Lincoln's. I nowhere get the impression in any narrative or reminiscence that the writer had in fact penetrated to the heart of his mystery, or that any man could penetrate to the heart of it. That brooding spirit had no real familiars. I get the impression that it never spoke out in complete self-revelation, and that it could not reveal itself completely to anyone. It was a very lonely spirit that looked out from underneath those shaggy brows and comprehended men without fully communicating with them, as if, in spite of all its genial efforts at comradeship, it dwelt apart, saw its visions of duty where no man looked on. There is a very holy and very terrible isolation for the conscience of every man who seeks to read the destiny in affairs for others as well as for himself, for a nation as well as for individuals. That privacy no man can intrude upon. That lonely search of the spirit for the right perhaps no man can assist. This strange child of the cabin kept company with invisible things, was born into no intimacy but that of its own silently assembling and deploying thoughts.

I have come here to-day, not to utter a eulogy

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on Lincoln; he stands in need of none, but to endeavor to interpret the meaning of this gift to the nation of the place of his birth and origin. Is not this an altar upon which we may forever keep alive the vestal fire of democracy as upon a shrine at which some of the deepest and most sacred hopes of mankind may from age to age be rekindled? For these hopes must constantly be rekindled, and only those who live can rekindle them. The only stuff that can retain the life-giving heat is the stuff of living hearts. And the hopes of mankind cannot be kept alive by words merely, by constitutions and doctrines of right and codes of liberty. The object of democracy is to transmute these into the life and action of society, the self-denial and self-sacrifice of heroic men and women willing to make their lives an embodiment of right and service and enlightened purpose. The commands of democracy are as imperative as its privileges and opportunities are wide and generous. Its compulsion is upon us. It will be great and lift a great light for the guidance of the nations only if we are great and carry that light high for the guidance of our own feet. We are not worthy to stand here unless we ourselves be in deed and in truth real democrats and servants of mankind, ready to give our very lives for the freedom and justice, and spiritual exaltation of the great nation which shelters and nurtures us.

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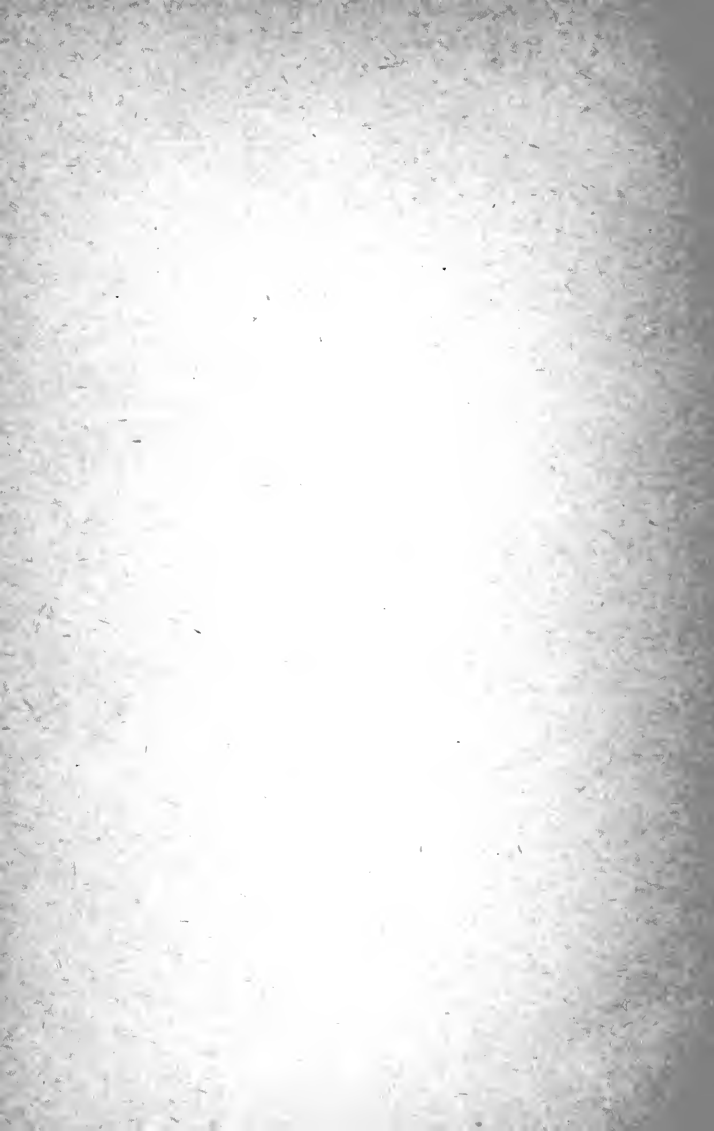
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